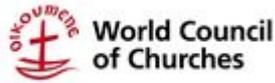


Global Survey on Eco-Theology, Climate Justice and Food Security (ETCF) in theological education and Christian leadership development 2014-2015 (ETCF study project)

A project of Globethics.net, Bread for the World, United Evangelical Mission and the World Council of Churches in cooperation with the Orthodox Academy of Crete and Volos Academy for Theological Studies.



Background

The last WCC assembly in Busan in November 2013 identified eco-theology and climate justice as two of the key priorities for the next working period (2014 – 2021). Issues like eco-theology and climate justice will be among the key components in the global pilgrimage of justice and peace for the post-Busan working period. Since climate change and ecological destruction are getting more and more menacing for humanity, climate issues provide a global challenge which should be reflected also in theological education and formation worldwide. Specialized ministries and their partners in the global South have shown the links between climate change and food security. Churches, ecumenical organizations, specialized ministries and institutions for theological education and research worldwide will be asked to contribute to the pilgrimage of justice and peace as no major working project in the WCC in the post-Busan working period will be possible without vital strategic cooperation, connectivity and common ownership with ecumenical partners in the global ecumenical movement.

According to preliminary data, although much research and project related work has been done already on these topics in some regions, only in a few institutions of theological education and Christian leadership development do they form part of the regular curriculum of instruction and training or inform theological formation processes in an integrated perspective,¹ especially in and in exchange with the global South. A great potential therefore lies in discovering existing resources for the transfer of knowledge and wisdom from all contexts/regions. The ecumenical sharing of resources about these issues could be a benefit for all. Indeed, sharing resources and exchanging knowledge concerning ecotheology, climate justice and food security (ECTF) can support the acknowledgement, the awareness of its relevancy and encourage churches and institutions of research and theological education to strengthen the importance and urgency of ecotheological formation. Ecotheology, Climate Change and Food Security are crucial for the future of Christian Leadership, for pastors as well as for church workers around the world.

ETCF study project

Previous discussion with institutions such as the EMW commission on theological education, the WCC leadership, *Globethics.net* the *United Evangelical Mission* and *Bread for the World (BfW)* have

¹While some substantial mapping of resources has been done by some outstanding scholars and research centres, (e.g. see bibliographies on eco-theology from Prof. Ernst Conradie in: Conradie, Ernst M.; *Christianity and ecological theology: Resources for further research*, Study Guides in Religion and Theology 11, SUN Press, Stellenbosch 2006. 405 pp. and Conradie, Ernst M.; *Christianity and Earthkeeping: In search of an inspiring vision*, Resources in Religion and Theology 16, SUN Press, Stellenbosch 2011, 155 pp.) we do not have a survey particularly on resources and best practice models for training in eco-theology, climate justice and food issues developed.

indicated that there is interest in this area which could be brought together in a limited research and working project to be started early in 2014 with young theologians in some of the organisations mentioned. The design of this working and research project, which is described below, follows previous experiences with limited, result-oriented and time-bound research projects both in *WCC-ETE (World Council of Churches-Ecumenical Theological Education)* and in the Association of Protestant Churches and Missions (*Evangelisches Missionswerk - EMW*) research project on the “Role of women in theological education” (1999).

The general goals of the project are

- **to highlight and to make visible** the contributions, resources and perspectives of *eco-theology, climate justice and food security particularly (ETCF)* from the churches of the South as often resources and contributions are only known and shared in the North.
- **to contribute to mainstreaming ecotheology, climate justice and food security issues (ETCF)** as integral components in Christian leadership formation both in formal theological education as well as in non-formal programmes of Christian and development training in the global South.
- **to support and foster** the relevance of *ETCF* in the awareness of churches in the global North and the global South in a period when global political negotiations on binding restrictions on CO2-emissions reach a certain climax (2015).
- **to contribute to international networking, exchange** and South-South, North-South, and West-East networking between regional hubs of research and education in issues of *ETCF* issues.

The target groups are

- **theological colleges, church-related seminaries, universities with their faculties of theology or religious studies and other church-related training facilities and programmes**
- **selected Christian or interfaith research centres and lay academies working on issues related to *ETCF*, and Eco-ethics**

The intended outcomes of the project are

- **the results of a well-designed questionnaire** probably followed by in-depth interviews with selected individuals from institutions of theological education, training and development education and regional associations of theological schools as well as networks to map (1) the current situation of training, teaching and research on *ETCF* in theological education, ecumenical formation and Christian leadership development and (2) available resources and examples of good practice on *ECTF*. This global and regional survey will be accompanied by other documents and sent to a selected number of the institutions mentioned above and as identified by partners of the project (possibly limited to 20-30 countries).

- **a list of resources identified** which would include monographs, journal articles/essays, key church statements), curriculum models and training tools (specific courses) are developed and practised in the global South related to *ETCF*, as well as examples of good practice in relation to *ECTF* (green churches, eco-congregations, etc.).
- **a directory** of major hubs and research institutes in the global South working and providing education or innovative projects in the area of *ETCF* and published on a common **web-platform** within *GlobeTheoLib* on *ETCF* resources.
- **a printed and digital global research report** on resources and educational tools/models for *ETCF* will be developed and contribute to the process of the WCC pilgrimage of justice and peace which has started after Busan assembly.
- **a special thematic collection with digitized resources for theological training on *ECTF*** to be launched in early 2015 within the Globethics.net Libraries and its *Global Digital Library on Theology and Ecumenism (GlobeTheoLib)*. It will include **a limited list of good practice examples with curriculum models on *ETCF*** and a limited compilation of core publications and teaching resources which can be recommended as significant and crucial to highlight the voices of Christian churches from the global South on *ETCF*.²

The benefits

Individual persons and institutions of theological education participating in the *ETCF* project will gain access free of charge to the new *ETCF* resources website and will be linked to the emerging network of research and educational hubs engaged in *ETCF* projects.

Project ownership and accountability

The formal project owner is the *Global Digital Theology for Theology and Ecumenism* in Geneva, which is part of the *Globethics.net* Foundation. This research project will be accompanied by a steering group, which is composed of:

- *Dr. Dietrich Werner* (until April 2014 International Programme Coordinator *ETE/WCC*; from early 2014 onwards Senior Theological Advisor, *Bread for the World*, Berlin)
- *Dr. Stephen Brown* (Programme Executive, *Globethics.net/Global Digital Library for Theology and Ecumenism*, Geneva)
- *Dr. Guillermo Kerber* (WCC executive staff for care for creation and climate justice, Geneva)
- *Rev. Andar Parlindungan* (Executive Secretary for Training and Empowerment, United Evangelical Mission, Wuppertal)

² Such as Michael Northcott's *A moral climate*, or contributions from McFague, Primavesi and Ernst Conradie and several edited volumes, see also standard bibliography from WCC-ETE for teaching Social Ethics and Ecumenism, section on creation.

and an international advisory group, based on correspondence with experts which are involved in some of the thematic fields related to this project.

Steering Group ETCF Project, 28 April 2014

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