



The 6th International Conference on Sustainable Alternatives for Poverty Reduction and Ecological Justice
(S.A.P.R.E.J 2026),
University of Malawi, Zomba, Malawi, April 9-12, 2025
Mode: Hybrid

Conference Theme

Religion and Sustainable Development: Towards Biodiversity and Climate Justice in Africa



Pic: A view of the Zomba Plateau: from 27vakantiedagen.nl

Climate change now stands at the heart of sustainable development, as shifting weather patterns, relentless droughts and floods, and mounting biodiversity loss threaten the very fabric of communities. Rising poverty and environmental decline pose daunting obstacles to a sustainable future. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda highlight how deeply climate action is woven into the global pursuit of sustainability. Achieving these goals demands collective action and the full mobilization of local resources, from tangible materials to the rich tapestry of socio-cultural traditions. Religion, a powerful cultural force, shapes how people interpret science and respond to policy. Practices like pilgrimage and faith communities' use of green spaces leave their mark on the environment, sometimes fueling climate change. By forging stronger connections between religious thought and climate science, we can inspire new paths toward sustainability at every level of society. Nowhere is this collaboration more urgent than in Africa, where biodiversity is vanishing at an alarming rate and religious devotion is on the rise. Sub-Saharan Africa is home to more than a fifth of the world's Christians, many of whom depend directly on nature's gifts—firewood, water, wild fruits, and fish—for their daily lives. Yet, despite this deep spiritual connection, the region faces ongoing crises: land degradation, deforestation, and the steady erosion of biodiversity. If current trends continue, Africa could lose half its bird and mammal species and up to a third of its lake productivity by the century's end. This stark reality exposes a paradox: as religious consciousness grows, so too does biodiversity loss, revealing a critical disconnect between faith, environmental stewardship, and sustainable development.

This conference brings together international scholars, scientists, religious leaders, civil activists, and policymakers to discuss the challenges and opportunities in promoting biodiversity and climate justice around the following and other related themes:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science, Religion and Sustainable Development • Religion and Climate Science • Biodiversity in Africa • Biodiversity Management and Poverty Nexus • Religious Education and Sustainable Development • Religion and Environmental science in conversation with Lynn White Jr. • Religion and Sustainable Living • Religion and Water Sustainability • Religion, GMOs and Sustainable Futures • Religion, Spirituality and Ecological Justice in Africa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interreligious Perspective on Creation Care • Community-based Natural Resource Management • Higher Education and Sustainable Development • Economic Justice and Climate Change • Religion, Sustainability and Climate Justice • Environment and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development • Sustainability and Creation Care • Environmental Policy and Governance • Waste Management in Africa
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Registration and abstract submission:

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Online Registration Form: <https://forms.gle/5G84PnQuD1SUB38U7>

Registration Fees:

International Participants:	\$170
African Participants	\$100
Online Participants	\$60
Malawian Participants	MK120,000
Postgraduates Students	MK100,000
Malawian Undergraduate Students	MK50, 000
Registration Fees sent to:	Account # 402117, UNIMA FCDA, National Bank of Malawi, Zomba Branch, SWIFT CODE: NBMAMWMW, REF: SAPREJ2025.

Abstract Submission Deadline:

February 28, 2025

Participation Registration Deadline:

March 15, 2025

For enquiries contact:

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Travelling to Malawi:

through Chileka Airport, Blantyre (the conference organizers shall arrange the logistics from the airport to the hotel).

Accommodation will be available at Mango Lodge: <https://mangolodgezomba.com>. Those requiring visas can apply for an e-visa from <https://evisa.gov.mw>.

Organisers:

- Andrianos Louk, World Council of Churches, Greece
- Nadja Furlan Štante, Institute for Philosophical and Religious Studies, Science and Research Centre Koper, Slovenia
- Sabada Lesya, University of Saskatchewan, Canada
- Seyed Masoud Noori, Representative of the I.M.A.M. Organisation at the UN and a Visiting Scholar at New York University (NYU).
- Tomas Insua, Laudato-Si Research Institute, Italy
- Antonis Kalogerakis, Orthodox Academy of Crete, Greece
- Linda Vogt Turner, Intercontinental Open University, Simon Fraser University, Canada
- Alemekaze Chikondi Phiri, Malawi Council of Churches
- Isabel Apawo Phiri, Blantyre Synod University
- Louis Ndekha, University of Malawi
- Jones Mawerenga, University of Malawi
- Hermann Mvula, University of Malawi
- Limbani Juttah, University of Malawi