

lassalle institut



Call for papers

Making hope possible

*3rd International Transdisciplinary Conference on
Environmental Justice*

August 25-29, 2024, Switzerland



Yann Arthus-Bertrand, *La Terre vue du ciel* (Copyright YAB)

Host:

Lassalle-Institut, Zug/Zürich (CH)

Partners (in alphabetical order):

COMPARTE network (COL), ESSC Institute of Environmental Science for Social Change (PHL), Georgetown Environmental Justice Program, Washington DC (USA), Institute of Geography, University of Berne (CH), Leuphana University of Lüneburg (D), Munich School of Philosophy (D), Newman Institutet (SWE), Universidad Iberoamericana Ciudad de Mexico (MEX), University of Fribourg, Environmental Sciences & Humanities Institute, (CH), AIESS Centre, Xavier Institute of Management (IND), ZHAW sustainability, Zurich University of Applied Sciences (CH)

The **biennial international transdisciplinary conference** on Environmental Justice at Lassalle-Institute (Switzerland) offers an inter- and transdisciplinary platform for an exchange between engaged scientists and reflective practitioners concerned by social-ecological transformation. As hosting organization operated by the worldwide Society of Jesus (religious order of the catholic church), Lassalle-Institute builds bridges between spiritual and cultural traditions as well as between sciences, fields of practice and civil society.

At this biennial conference, the common work on environmental justice will focus in particular on the question of how hope can be made possible by action oriented transdisciplinary collaboration from a view of aggravating crisis of climate change and biodiversity loss, of the need for decrease of global injustice and for a thoughtful handling of migration issues. As Raymond Williams (1921-1988) put it, however: "To be truly radical is to make hope possible rather than despair convincing".

Nowadays, coming from approaches such as “engaged scholarship” (van de Ven 2007, Barge & Shockley-Zarabac 2008), transdisciplinarity (Mittelstrass 2003, Hirsch Hadorn et al. 2008, Rigolot 2020, Merçon 2022), and discussions focus on concepts such as transformative science (Schneidewind & Singer-Brodowski 2014), active hope (Macy & Johnstone 2012/2022) or the crossing of the impossible (Pelluchon 2023). This year, our conference will be dedicated to the **investigation of such concepts and its scientific as well as its practical consequences.**

Main questions

- How far can “hope” be a **legitimate, intercultural, and valid concept for transdisciplinary research and cross-border collaboration** on ecological transformation and decrease of injustice? What could it mean regarding science-industry, science-practice, science-policy collaborations?
- How do diverse disciplines such as economy, ecology, ethics, political and communication sciences, public management, governance studies, arts, practical theology etc. identify, argue and explain the **evidence of optimistic perspectives**? How do they deal with the **evidence for pessimism**?
- How could “active hope” be modeled further as a “practice” (Macy & Johnstone 2012/2022, p. 4) and thus how can we “tackle the mess we’re in” (ibid.) in a holistic and **diverse field of transdisciplinary work** such as (natural, social, political, economic, technical) scientific research, policy planning and implementation, as well as public dialogue and community communications?

Our approach is resolutely systemic, transdisciplinary, and transformative and open to the questions arising from policy fields, international organizations, internationally networked companies, democratic movements and transformation projects. The conviction is that “*science sans conscience*” (Rabelais) would reach the limits of short and mid-term impact in public controversies. Therefore, we aim at favoring the entanglement of scientific research, community wisdom, ethical, and crossing-border collaboration as well as spiritual and artistic reflection. Personal exchange in inspiring brainstorming facilities will play an important role. Last but not least, the Lassalle-Institute offers access to Zen and Christian meditations for those interested, as well as excursions to discover the beautiful landscapes of Central Switzerland.

We invite theoretical, empirical, methodological, and experimental contributions as well as contributions at the interface of science, professional practice, spirituality, arts, politics, economy, and society.

Main topics

Proposals are welcome especially to the following main topics, organized around or rather leading to conceptualizations of hope, following the main questions listed above:

- 1. Ontological, epistemological and praxeological foundations of:** Fragility, vulnerability and endangerment on the one hand, resilience, diversity, the practice turn and system dynamics on the other.
- 2. Deontological foundations of transdisciplinarity:** spiritual, rational and praxeological (organizational, economic, political, governmental) perspectives, concepts, and approaches
- 3. Methodologies of transdisciplinarity:** hermeneutics, embedded case studies, action/ transformative research, citizen science, knowledge governance
- 4. Contexts of transdisciplinary:** Complex and dynamic systems of innovation, emerging out of cooperation between business, technology, science, civic society, and politics
- 5. Processes of transformative transdisciplinarity:** objectives, levers, drivers, social roles, pathways, and timescales of transformation, all this on micro-, meso- and macro-levels
- 6. Regulating systems of transformation:** Markets, policy fields, governmental practices, conceptualizations of the commons, human, animal and environmental rights, epistemic orders

Formats of interaction

As formats of interaction, please choose and prepare one or two of the following categories:

- a. Keynotes** on scaling up engaged scholarship for socio-ecological transformation
- b. Presentations of papers** on main topics (see above)
- c. Sessions/Panels/Roundtables** on main topics (see above)
- d. Chaired small groups** for deepening case studies and joint action projects
- e. Business desk:** exchange on possible joint activities/projects with business/public administrations
- f. Placement desk** for internships, project participation, volunteers

Submissions till January 31st, 2024

Submissions for individual papers may be in English and should be sent in the form of an abstract (500 words) on the conference website www.lassalle-institut.org/en/environmental-justice.html by **January 31st, 2024**. They must outline the connection of the contribution to the *main questions* and at least one *main topic* of the conference. Furthermore, they should contain information on the *preferred format(s) of interaction*, on *methodological approaches*, *publications* so far and *institutional affiliations*. For session/panel/roundtable proposals a separate abstract for each paper should be included. All abstracts will be reviewed by the academic committee and specialists from the conference partners as needed. **Notifications of acceptance will be announced by March 2024.**

A publication with contributions of the participants of the conference is in preparation

For all further information and contacts, please use the conference website:
www.lassalle-institut.org/en/environmental-justice.html

Costs for accommodation, full board, and participation fee
prices will be published shortly on our website.

REDUCTIONS ARE POSSIBLE ON REQUEST ON A LIMITED BASIS.