

Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative



UN Climate Change Conference COP24 Katowice, Poland

Tuesday 11th Dec.

Earth Day Breakfast Meeting

Valérie and Aneta attended an early morning network meeting to discuss the 50th anniversary of Earth Day Network in 2020. This anniversary will come at a time when we are confronted with complex and critical environmental challenges. The year 2020 is important as the Paris agreement then comes into action. It was a good opportunity to look ahead, to start developing concepts and to begin planning new activities.



"Good Climate" City Pavilion

Katowice Municipality has put up a pavilion at the city market square in connection with COP. It is used by local schools and citizens for education in climate change and sustainable lifestyles. Brahma Kumaris was invited to organize two workshops.

"Mind & Matter: Confluence of two Living Systems"

Carolyn presented her professional work at the Institute of Advanced Sustainability Studies and gave an overview of the current state of the earth. By showing satellite pictures of the earth, the impact of humanity on environment was clearly visible. Inner change is an integral part of systems change.

Dorotka presented the BK Project "A Million Good wishes for the Earth" and inspired everyone to write down one good wish as a contribution. She then conducted a meditation.



Carolyn presenting in the Good Climate Pavilion

Climate Change Demands Inner Change

Later in the afternoon, Golo gave a presentation on positive values such as love, happiness and respect. They have an immensely powerful influence on the self, relationships, and the environment. As an example, he took up the renewable energy projects and the yogic farming practice taught by Brahma Kumaris in India; "When we meditate with the seeds and the plants, they grow better and the nutrient content increases".

Sonja explained, in depth, the 10 ways to change the world. She conducted a dialogue on how to connect the values of being unlimited and positive to climate change. She ended the program with a guided meditation - healing ourselves and the world.



Sonja sharing blessing cards with school kids



Golo presenting Yogic Farming at the Good Climate Pavilion

Katowice Cultural Centre – “Healthy Minds, Healthy People, Healthy Planet.”

BK’s main COP program was held in the nearby Katowice cultural centre. Around 50 people made their way through the falling snow to this panel discussion, more than 400 people were listening on-line. Ewa welcomed the audience and introduced the well-known facilitators Prof. Skubala and Dr Kulik.



Prof. Skubala and Dr Kulik with Sister Jayanti, Golo, Monica Sadkowska and Dr Andrzej Kassenberg

The panellists were Sister Jayanti, Golo, Monica Sadkowska a Climate Activist and Dr Andrzej Kassenberg from the Institute for Sustainable Development.

The panellists brought their expertise of spirituality, science and activism. The discussion circled around the moral implications of climate change and possible ways out of the crisis. The panellists touched by the questions which included topics such as: "What is the source of greed?", "How to initiate a spiritual renewal?" and "What can be done?"

Interesting answers came such as:

- when we forget our true identity, the environment begins to suffer.
- carbon emissions continue to rise, even though we have money, technology and strategies.
- The reason is greed, and the reason for greed is insecurity and inner emptiness.
- Spirituality in my awareness makes me passionate. Inner activism is to change consciousness.
- It is the time for spiritual renewal
- The near future will hold many difficult episodes. It is a reaction to the things we did in the past (Karma). Beyond that, there is the light that we are looking for. Time is a cycle and the future will be good and bright.
- During evolution, we lost our graceful relationship to nature. Humans made nature subservient and exploitation began. We are now on our way to a more graceful relationship with nature, for example, by using renewable energy. We need courage to return to this grace.
- Change food habits! Don't waste any food, eat less, eat slowly and eat a plant-based diet.
- Whatever we do in technology and economy needs spirituality to be successful.

The facilitators summarized two important messages for the audience:

1. Inner change based on true identity and self-respect results in positive life style changes
2. Clean technology, just economy and honest policies create beneficial systemic changes



Ewa, Dr Andrzej Kassenberg, Monica Sadkowska, Prof. Skubala, Dr Kulik, Sister Jayanti, Golo, and Aneta

Eco Reception

After the programme, BKs organised a second reception in the convent of St Stephens Catholic Church. Our kitchen team prepared delicious snacks and sumptuous cakes, including a yummy vegan and gluten-free cheesecake by Jola and Mirek Trymbulak from Gdansk. The panellists and many of the participants moved seamlessly into lively talks. Stefan from Kielece Climate Camp played beautiful recorder music whilst our friends had an opportunity to relax and share.



Sonja and Golo meeting delegates from the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation to discuss the joint press conference tomorrow.

