

Consciousness and Climate Change



Maureen Goodman, UK

Programme Director for the Brahma Kumaris, UK

BK representative at the UN, Vienna

Maureen works with diverse communities in building spiritual capacity in times of transition. As a presenter at several climate change conferences, she has a deep interest in the spiritual and ethical dimensions of climate change, the nature of harmony, and the connection between our inner state of being and the state of our Earth. She has a long term involvement in inter-religious dialogue and represents the Brahma Kumaris on the Board of Religious Leaders of the Elijah Interfaith Institute and is a Spiritual Ambassador to The Living Peace Projects. In April 2022 she travelled to Ukraine with religious leaders as part of the Faith in Ukraine initiative. Maureen is part of the Strategic Circle of the Spirit of Humanity Forum, offering a safe space for dialogue among leaders and change-makers seeking transformation based on core human values.



Golo J. Pilz, Germany/India

Advisor on Renewable Energy

Golo Pilz of German origin has practised Raja Yoga meditation since 1984. He lives most of the year at the main campus of the Brahma Kumaris in Mount Abu, India. In the early 90s, he established the Brahma Kumaris as one of the major users of renewable energies in India. More recently, Golo has directed the construction of India One, a 1MW solar thermal power plant, an innovative R&D project partly sponsored by the German (BMUB/GIZ) and Indian Governments (MNRE). He has been involved in more than 20 R&D projects on solar power for rural applications, cooking, and energy storage. Golo advocates sustainable solutions through an ethical and value-based approach. He is an experienced presenter and participates regularly in UN Climate Change Conferences.



Sonja Ohlsson, Denmark

Designated Contact Point to the UNFCCC

International Coordinator BK Environment Initiative

Sonja is the director of Brahma Kumaris in Denmark and has practised raja yoga meditation since 1986. She is a meditation teacher with the Prison service in Copenhagen. In 2009 she was instrumental in developing BK Environment initiative in order to meet the need for a higher environmental awareness within the international BK community and to add the inner dimension to the discussions at the UN climate change and biodiversity conferences, plus to the UN Environment Assembly.



Valérie Bernard, Switzerland/France

NGO Representative of the Brahma Kumaris to UN, Geneva

As an NGO Representative of the Brahma Kumaris to the UN, Geneva, Valérie has had an interest in spirituality all her life and has been practising Raja Yoga meditation since 1986. She is actively involved, in raising public awareness about climate change within the interfaith movement at the COPs being part of the Interfaith Liaison Committee with the UNFCCC and at the United Nations in Geneva. She has been involved in the ecological movement since Rio 1992, promoting sustainable development and the ethical and human rights aspects of climate change. She is dedicated to raising awareness to advance the standing of women, promote sustaining practices with the environment and through interfaith gatherings, broaden cultural understanding.

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Carolin Fraude, Germany

Coordinator of Brahma Kumaris Center in Berlin

Carolin works for the transdisciplinary research group AMA (A Mindset for the Anthropocene) at the IASS Potsdam. She holds a Diploma in Education Science and studied philosophy, social science and psychology at the FU Berlin. Her research interests include design of processes and spaces engaging with people's beliefs, values, worldviews, emotions and motivations, understood as leverage points for transformation towards a sustainable society. Since 1998 Carolin has taught Raja Yoga meditation. She co-leads the BK Center in Berlin and coordinates BK activities nationally. Since 2013 she has been part of delegations to the UNFCCC and the Commission on the Status of Women.



Shantanu Mandal, India

Youth representative of the BK to UN Environment Program

Major Group for Children and Youth

Shantanu lives within the community of Brahma Kumaris Spiritual headquarters, Mt. Abu, India and has practiced Raja Yoga for 20 years. He has a background in fashion design and holds a second bachelor's degree in Fine Arts. He has been part of the Conference of Youth (COY) conferences since 2015 and is member of YOUNGO, the official youth constituency of UNFCCC. Additionally he was a key member in the Youth Forum at the UN Convention on Combating Desertification in 2019 and is a mentor in the Climate Ambassadors Program of Care about Climate organisation. His main interest lies in exploring how the values of benevolence and compassion can reflect in the environmental work and holistic activism. *"Simplicity is Kindness"*.



Dr. Awatif Sharaf, Bahrain

Board President Bahrain Meditation Center

Awatif is a retired consultant family doctor who worked with Ministry of Health for 34 years, in 2002 she was Chief of Medical Services, in addition to her medical role, then worked as Primary Care Development consultant. She has been practicing meditation since 2004, and has been teaching meditation since 2009. Participated in organizing self-development and meditation retreats in Oxford, UK, and India. She was a co-organizer of the International Self-Development conferences in the Kingdom of Bahrain where the last one was under the theme "Creating Change" (February 2017). She is also an Accredited coach as professional certified coach (PCC) in 2021 with International Coaching Federation (ICF).



Piyush Ahuja, Dubai, U.A. E

Youth Representative to Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative

Piyush is a learner and believes that life and nature inspire us to grow every day and look for something new in your today. He strongly believes in protecting the environment and joined the Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative (BKEI) to support the UNFCCC by being engaged with Youth services through COY & LCOY. He has facilitated in the 1st LCOY in UAE with Raja Yoga Center Environment Initiative (RYCEI) in 2020. He serves the Young Adults & Children in UAE & Middle East by imparting the knowledge of Climate change effect and ways to improve our efforts to sustain it. As an entrepreneur in life, he follows the same principles in his business to Reduce, Reuse & Recycle most of the product packaging and help being the world more sustainable.

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Aneta Loj, Poland/India **Brahma Kumaris Focal Point to UNCCD**

Aneta's professional career took her to various countries in Europe and she has lived in Hong Kong, Japan, China and India. She has been associated with Brahma Kumaris since 2006 and is today a member of its National Coordinating Team in Poland. Her genuine interest in spiritual truth and benevolence led to her involvement in projects that benefit communities through sustainable development and capacity building. Since 2011, she has been providing her service at "India One" Solar Thermal Power Plant. She coordinated the activities of Awareness Cum Training Center on Concentrated Solar Thermal Technologies under the program of UNDP - GEF - MNRE, Government of India.



Shaikha Al Arfaj, Kuwait **CEO, Al Arfaj Group Holding Company**

Shaikha is the CEO and Vice Chairman of Al Arfaj Co., a family organization established in 1961 that initially offered environmental, recycling and waste management solutions. She is a Construction Engineer, having graduated from Kuwait University with B.Sc. in Civil Engineering with a specialization in construction management. She has had a long-standing position as general manager for PACE CO in Kuwait. Shaikha is a teacher in "Mastery over the Self" studies in Kuwait, co-founder of a well-being training company in Egypt and founder of a vegetarian restaurant.



Muna Alarfaj, Kuwait **CEO, Beatuna Recycling Company**

Muna has been a board member and an integral part of Alarfaj Group of Companies for the past 21 years, and is now the CEO of Beatuna, a plastic recycling factory. Along with many other sister companies, the Alarfaj's main focus is waste management solutions in Kuwait. She saw the importance of the connection between our internal selves and the environment. Muna is also the co-founder of Harmony House Meditation Center, and the owner of Be cafe (a plant-based space for wellbeing). She also facilitated countless programs focused on meditation, raising awareness, leadership, ethical practices in work, and implementing spirituality in our daily lives..



Birajith Baskaran, UK **Youth Representative Brahma Kumaris Eco Initiative**

Birajith is an aerospace engineering graduate, who is looking to bring a sustainable future in the field of engineering. He is someone who is passionate about nature and loves to spread awareness about the importance of looking after mind as well as the nature. Have attended a Live FM radio show in Lagos Nigera to answer questions about the mentality of young people in this generation, at the same time, gave talks on Mental Health and Hygiene. Attended COY16 in 2021 and supported the VCOY team as a volunteer.