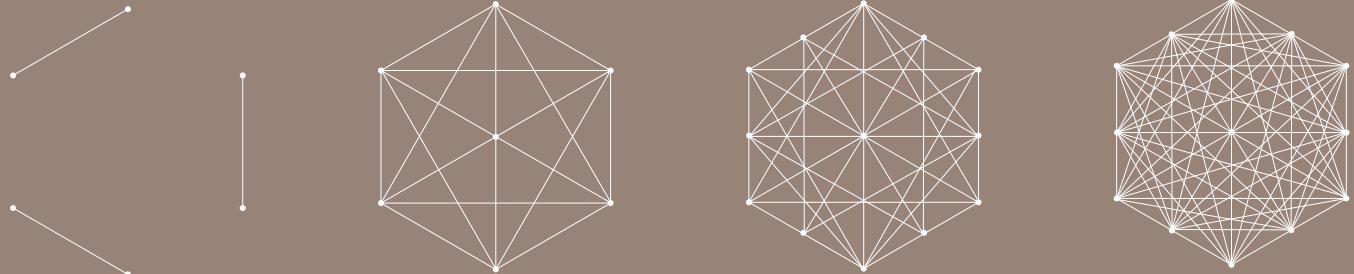


International Seminar

Agirre Lehendakaria Center



December 1-2
2025

Ekoetxea
Urdaibai

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AGIRRE LEHENDAKARIA CENTER
for Social and Political Studies

Current social and environmental systems are undergoing faster and more complex changes than at any other time in recent history. Governments around the world are seeking **strategies to adapt to climate change that allow us to preserve cultural heritage** while sustainably responding to new global socio-economic realities.

Basque society has historically been able to find solutions to major transitions in times of great difficulty. However, today new challenges are emerging related to the digital transition, the future of work, the transformation of the care system, the preservation of landscapes, and the protection of cultural spaces. These interconnected challenges are currently reflected in the public **debate surrounding the potential expansion of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao** in the Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve.

To enrich this debate with international perspectives, the **Agirre Lehendakaria Center** and **AC4-Columbia University** have organized the international seminar described below.

Program

DAY 1 - INTERNAL WORKING SESSION (INTERNATIONAL TEAM + ALC)

Space for strategic dialogue, alignment and joint exploration

11:30 - 12:00 | Welcome

Brief introduction to the purpose of the seminar:

Context of the listening process

- Introduction to the objectives of the joint work between Agirre Lehendakaria Center and AC4 - Columbia University
- Alignment of expectations for the seminar

Participants: ALC / AC4 / International speakers / Key actors in the listening process

12:00 - 13:15 | Introduction to the Listening Process

- Conceptual framework and relevance (key elements identified)
- Process and main findings
- Key learnings

13:15 - 14:30 | Lunch break

14:30 - 15:30 | Conditions for a Just Transition in Urdaibai: Focus Session with Local Mayors

Presentation of the joint article on listening processes as a governance tool: Joshua D. Fisher.

- Governance and institutions
- Culture and community
- Art, nature, and territorial economy

- Science, technology, and new tools for addressing complex social challenges

Busturia, Ajangiz, Muxika, Sukarrieta, Gautegiz Arteaga, Elantxobe, Ibarrangelu, Ereño.

15:30 - 16:30 | Urdaibai Digital Tool

- Presentation and methodological alignment
- Digital infrastructures for listening and social participation
- Potential for social and territorial planning
- Data governance implications and scalability

16:30 - 17:30 | Main conclusions: key takeaways from the session

Identification of priority messages for Day 2

DAY 2. COMMUNITY LISTENING IN SUPPORT OF SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION PROCESSES

09:00 - 09:15 | Opening and welcome (coffee). Itziar Moreno, Joshua D. Fisher, Asier Aranbarri.

09:15 - 09:30 | Presentation of the Listening Process: key findings. Gorka Espiau, Julen Larrañaga (Agirre Lehendakaria Center).

The main conclusions of the Urdaibai Listening Process will be presented, highlighting the key narrative patterns identified in more than 900 interviews and the implications for collaborative governance and the socio-ecological transition in the Basque Country.



Program

09:30 – 11:00 | Panel I. Participation and Governance through Listening

In a context where traditional participatory frameworks are losing momentum, this panel will explore how social listening, collective interpretation, and institutional innovation can renew governance from within communities. Building on the Urdaibai listening process, the discussion will address the active role of communities in territorial transformation and in redefining the relationships between citizens, territory, and institutions.

- **Moderator:** Asier Aranbarri, Director of Social Innovation and the 2030 Agenda, Basque Government
- **Speakers:** Dr. Jacqueline Klopp (Columbia University), Ms. Kayo Funato (Hiroshima University) and Dr. Lidia Cano Pecharroman (University of Texas)

11:00 – 12:30 | Panel II. Socio-Ecological Transition in Urdaibai

This panel positions Urdaibai as a microcosm of the challenges of the socio-ecological transition, where biosphere reserves face tensions between biodiversity, cultural values, natural resources, and economic development, as well as disputes over boundaries, rights, and governance that can undermine both environmental and social objectives.

- **Moderator:** Tamara Muruetagoiena, Vice President of Sustainability, International Fresh Produce Association.

- **Speakers:** Dr. Meng Qu (Hokkaido University), Dr. Jacqueline Klopp (Columbia University), Thaddeus Pawlowski (Columbia University), Dr. Lidia Cano Pecharroman (University of Texas).

12:30 – 13:00 | The Digitalization of Listening Processes. Itziar Moreno (Agirre Lehendakaria Center).

This session will present the digital platform developed by ALC to visualize and manage complex socio-ecological transitions. Using the Urdaibai case as an example, it will illustrate how listening, mapping, and collective interpretation can support collaborative governance and sustainable transformation. The session will showcase the progress made to date—including more than 900 anonymized narratives and real-time mapping of local initiatives—and will explore how the tool could be scaled to manage co-creation processes in different contexts.

13:00 – 14:00 | Lunch break

14:00 – 15:30 | Panel III. Technology and Social Innovation in Service of Complex Social Challenges: Digital Twins and Simulations.

This session explores how digital infrastructures—from social simulations to emerging social digital twins—can transform the way societies listen, learn, and act collectively. Building on the Urdaibai listening process, the panel will discuss how new forms of collective intelligence and participatory models can foster more just and adaptive governance.

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- **Moderator:** Itziar Moreno, Agirre Lehendakaria Center
- **Speakers:** Dr. Lidia Cano Pecharromán (University of Texas) and Thaddeus Pawlowski (Columbia University).

15:30 - 17:00 | Panel IV. Art, Nature, and Local Culture

This panel explores how artistic and cultural institutions can reconfigure the relationships between nature, culture, and territory, promoting new forms of socio-ecological awareness and community regeneration. Speakers will examine how museums and cultural networks can foster transformative dialogues between art, the environment, and collective life in territories such as Urdaibai.

- **Moderator:** Julen Larrañaga, Agirre Lehendakaria Center.
- **Speaker:** Dr. Meng Qu (Hokkaido University) and Kayo Funato (Hiroshima University)

17:00 - 17:30 | Closing session

In the closing session, Joshua D. Fisher, Director of AC4 at Columbia University, will synthesize the key ideas emerging from the day's discussions and will moderate a roundtable with the participating institutions. Drawing on his experience in environmental peacebuilding and collaborative governance, he will reflect on how the Urdaibai process contributes to a broader understanding of socio-ecological transitions and the role of listening, dialogue, and digital innovation in shaping a sustainable future.



Program

PARTICIPANTS

- Agirre Lehendakaria Center Team
- Joshua D. Fisher, Director of AC4 - Columbia Climate School
- Karin Okada, Collaborator of AC4 - Columbia Climate School
- Jacqueline M. Klopp, Columbia University
- Thaddeus Pawlowski, Columbia GSAPP / Center for Resilient Cities and Landscapes
- Tamara MuruetagoienaKarin Okada, FRESH PRODUCE
- Lidia Cano Pecharroman, University of Texas
- Hu Meng Qu, Hokkaido University
- Kayo Funato, Hiroshima University
- Ibone Bengoetxea, First Deputy Lehendakari and Minister of Culture and Language Policy, Basque Government
- Elixabete Etxanobe, President of the Provincial Council of Bizkaia, Provincial Council of Bizkaia
- Asier Aranbarri, Director of Social Innovation and Agenda 2030, Basque Government
- Jaime Orueta, Mayor, Sukarrieta City Council
- Aitor Aretxaga, Mayor, Busturia City Council
- Koldo Carbonell, Mayor, Ajangiz City Council
- José Antonio López, council member, Gautegiz Arteaga City Council
- Josu Sabin Olano, Mayor, Arratzu City Council
- Jesus Maria Ziluaga, Mayor, Ibarrangelu City Council
- Ager Lejarreta, Mayor, Ereño City Council
- Begoña Enbeitia, Mayor, Muxika City Council
- Patxi Egurrola, Mayor, Elantxobe City Council
- Maria Oianguren, Director, Gernika Gogoratz
- Ramón Zallo, Gernika Gogoratz
- Jokin Alberdi, Gernika Gogoratz

- Alfonso Dubois, Gernika Gogoratz
- Ibone Ametzaga, Associate Professor in the Ecology Area at the University of the Basque Country, UNESCO Chair
- Miren Onaindia, Agirre Lehendakaria Fundazioa
- Txus Peña, Agirre Lehendakaria Fundazioa
- María José Sanz, Scientific Director of Basque Center for Climate Change (BC3) and Ikerbasque Professor
- Malen Domínguez, Telesforo Monzón Foundation
- Ugo Mayor, Ikerbasque Research Professor and Director of Social Impact at EHU
- Ihabar Arriaran, EMUN S. Coop.
- Iñigo Arbiol, Deputy Director of the Secretariat of the United Nations Local2030 Coalition
- Paula Canal, Euskampus
- Naiara Goia, Managing Director, Arantzazu Lab
- Ione Ardaiz, Projects lead, Arantzazu Lab
- Marc Neuman, BC3
- Elena Galan, BC3
- Garbiñe Etxezarreta, Kutxa Fundazioa
- Mikel Insausti, Kutxa Fundazioa

SPEAKERS



Jacqueline M. Klopp — Columbia Climate School

Jacqueline M. Klopp is the Director of the Center for Sustainable Urban Development at Columbia University's Climate School and a social scientist specializing in sustainable urban transport, land-use governance and climate policy. Her research examines the intersection of mobility systems, spatial planning, air quality, and climate transitions, with particular emphasis on equity, accountability, and democratic governance. She is widely recognized for her contributions to open transport data and just mobility systems and has authored numerous publications on land-use politics and transport planning in rapidly transforming urban environments.

She is co-founder of DigitalMatatus, the award-winning initiative that developed the first open transit data and public map for Nairobi's minibus network and has helped establish DigitalTransport4Africa and Digital Cairo to strengthen collaborative mobility research across continents. She leads the Partnership for Research on Informal and Shared Mobility and is a core member of the Clean Air Toolbox for Cities. In 2021, she was named one of the "Remarkable Women in Transport" by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Prior to joining Columbia Climate School, Klopp served as Assistant Professor and Director of the Economic and Political Development concentration at Columbia SIPA. She holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from McGill University and a B.A. from Harvard University and teaches in Columbia's Sustainable Development program.



Kayo Funato — Hiroshima University

Kayo Funato is Senior Officer in the Partnership Agreement and Global Strategy Group at the International Office of Hiroshima University, where she oversees strategic partnership agreements with overseas institutions and advances the university's international engagement agenda. Her work focuses on inter-institutional collaboration, partnership development, and peace-related initiatives in higher education.

Funato holds a B.A. in International Relations from the University of Minnesota. She began her career in corporate finance at the New York Branch of the Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan (now SBI Shinsei Bank), later serving as a financial analyst. After returning to Japan, she worked in public relations at a regional bank, strengthening communications with global stakeholders. She subsequently gained international experience in Europe before joining Hiroshima University, initially supporting research administration and the organization of global academic events.

Since 2015, she has played a key role in the International Office, contributing to institutional cooperation and leading initiatives including the University Presidents for Peace conferences, reflecting Hiroshima University's dedication to peace, global dialogue, and academic diplomacy.

Program



Lidia Cano Pecharromán — University of Texas at Austin

Lidia Cano Pecharromán is an Assistant Professor in Community and Regional Planning at the University of Texas School of Architecture and Director of the Extreme Weather Adaptation Lab at the LBJ School of Public Affairs. Her research examines the intersections of environmental policy, governance, and planning, with a particular focus on climate adaptation, resilience, and methodologies for assessing and preparing for extreme weather events. She also explores the role of non-anthropocentric perspectives and the more-than-human world in shaping innovative approaches to decision-making and environmental governance.

She holds a Ph.D. in Urban Studies and Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where she was part of the Environmental Policy and Planning Group and the Science Impact Collaborative. She also holds a master's in international Affairs from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs and a Law Degree from Universidad Autónoma de Madrid.

Program



Meng Qu — Hokkaido University

Meng Qu, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor and Deputy Director at the Center for Advanced Tourism Studies at Hokkaido University. His research focuses on rural regeneration through international art festivals, socially engaged art, creative tourism, relational aesthetics, sustainability, and community participation. He employs documentary filmmaking as a method for fieldwork and public engagement and leads comparative research on community-embedded art and rural revitalization across the Asia-Pacific and Europe.

He serves as co-convener of the Small Island Cultures Research Initiative (SICRI), Associate Editor for *Tourism Geographies* and *Folk, Knowledge, Place*, Regional Editor for *Event Management*, and editorial board member for multiple journals. His work has received funding from JSPS KAKENHI, the National Natural Science Foundation of China, and the British Academy.

Before academia, Qu worked in design leadership roles in Shanghai and Beijing, specializing in tourism-oriented spatial narratives. Since 2011 he has participated in art-led revitalization projects in China and Japan, including the Xucun International Art Festival and the Setouchi Triennale.



Tamara Muruetagoiena — International Fresh Produce Association

Tamara Muruetagoiena is Vice President of Sustainability at the International Fresh Produce Association (IFPA), where she leads global sustainability strategies for the fresh produce and floral industry. Her work includes designing climate-smart agriculture initiatives, coordinating cross-sector sustainability priorities, and advancing regenerative agricultural models.

With over two decades of international experience in sustainability, agriculture, and forestry, she previously served as Executive Director of Great Mountain Forest in the United States, and held senior roles at Driscoll's in sustainability and R&D. She has managed USAID-funded environmental programs at Columbia University and has advised international forest and agricultural organizations including the Southern Europe Forest Owners Association. Since 2005, she has served on the Board of the Earth Rights Institute, a UN-affiliated NGO.

She holds a B.A. in Political Science from Washington State University, an MBA jointly from ESEUNE Business School and UC Berkeley, and a Master of Forest Science from Yale University.



Thaddeus Pawlowski – Center for Resilient Cities and Landscapes, Columbia University

Thaddeus Pawlowski is a founding partner of Partners in Public Design (PPD), an urban design practice dedicated to advancing more resilient, sustainable, and equitable cities. He also serves as Managing Director of the Center for Resilient Cities and Landscapes (CRCL) at Columbia University, where he mobilizes global expertise to support frontline communities confronting the impacts of climate change.

Prior to establishing PPD and CRCL, Pawlowski spent fourteen years working for the City of New York, leading efforts in resilient infrastructure, community recovery, and post-disaster reconstruction, including major contributions to the city's recovery strategy following Hurricane Sandy. His work bridges public policy, spatial planning, and community engagement to support systemic transformation and climate-resilient urban development.

Pawlowski was a Loeb Fellow at the Harvard Graduate School of Design (2014–2015). He holds a Master of Architecture and a Certificate in Urban Design from the University of Pennsylvania, and a Bachelor's degree in Creative Nonfiction Writing from the University of Pittsburgh.