



FACULTY OF ARTS

Adelaide Summer Research Scholarship 2021-2022

Caring for Our Common Home: The Eco-social Citizenship of Pope Francis

Supervisor: Dr Benito Cao

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Environmental concerns and ecological values are transforming what it means to be a citizen in the 21st century. Governments around the world are recognising environmental rights, activists refer to our duties to the environment, corporations present themselves as good environmental citizens, children are taught to be mindful of their ecological footprint, the media tell us repeatedly to reduce, reuse and recycle, and theorists have begun to consider all this under a new field of study called environmental citizenship.

In this context, the most powerful institutional contribution to the reformulation of environmental citizenship is arguably Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical "Laudato Si', on Care for Our Common Home". The Vatican's program for putting the encyclical into action has just been released, with the pope inviting all people on a journey "to create the future we want: a more inclusive, fraternal, peaceful and sustainable world".

This Summer Research Scholarship Project will examine the concept of ecological citizenship in the encyclical and the Laudato Si' Action Platform. The student will also conduct a literature review of relevant theoretical and empirical work, and analyse the media representation of the encyclical since its publication in 2015. The project will expose the student to interdisciplinary research methods and draw on previous and current research on environmental citizenship conducted by the project leader, Dr Benito Cao, including his book *Environment and Citizenship* (2015) and his contributions to the European Network for Environmental Citizenship. The project will include the preparation of a scholarly article for submission to a high-quality peer reviewed journal in which the student will be co-author. The project will also inform the teaching of several courses, including "Introduction to Global Politics", "Citizenship and Globalisation", "Global Environmental Politics", "Environment and Citizenship", and "The State of the World: Post Covid-19". This will familiarise the student with the teaching/research nexus.

The student will gain a range of research skills, including;

- identifying relevant background literature and producing a literature review
- organising key relevant themes
- sourcing data from popular media and other internet sources
- conducting textual and discourse analysis
- writing a scholarly journal article
- working on a collaborative research project.