An International Conference & Ecoscimatic Retreat

Oceanography & The Blue Humanities

(Literary Geographies of Islands & Water Bodies)

DECEMBER

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Sri Vijaya Puram (Port Blair),
Andaman & Nicobar Islands, India

Jointly organized by:

ECOSOPHICAL FOUNDATION FOR THE STUDY OF LITERATURE AND ENVIRONMENT
EFSLE
LEGH

सत्यमेव जयते

भारतीय मानवविज्ञान सर्वेक्षण
ANTHROPOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

PONDICHERRY UNIVERSITY
VERS LA LUMIÈRE

ICOBH 2026, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, India

Oceanography & the Blue Humanities: Literary Geographies of Islands and Water Bodies

About EFSLE:

EFSLE (Ecosophical Foundation for the Study of Literature and Environment) is a Non-profit Organization and an International Open Academic Forum for creative interaction among intellectuals, academicians, environmental activists, naturalists, nature-lovers, and those involved and earnestly dedicated to these issues and who are receptive and undogmatic to one another's individuality and their standpoints. It intends to amalgamate two relevant issues Gender and Human Rights with Literature and Environment primarily initiated by Dr. Rishikesh Kumar Singh what he calls it the ***LEGH Movement*** (Literature, Environment, Gender and Human Rights) - ***A Socio-Ecoliterary Movement***. This is the first venture of its kind where all the four issues are juxtaposed together. This specialty makes this movement relevant.

Though 'Environment and Literature' is our core concern however, this environment prominently includes the human environment too, where we care for the most vulnerable sections of the society. It includes empowering women, children care towards their holistic development and sustainable livelihood for all the deprived sections of the society. Amalgamating all these fields of studies this organization tends to be the world's largest platform of its kind. Interdisciplinary and Multi-disciplinary aspects are its bases. ***We have our Executive Councils in all the Twenty-eight (28) Indian states and Eight (8) Union Territories. Also, we are working in 18 countries (plus 7 proposed ones) across the globe.***

About Pondicherry University (The Department of Ocean Studies and Marine Biology):

Pondicherry University is a premier Central University established in 1985 by the Government of India. Located on a massive 800-acre, Wi-Fi-enabled campus along the scenic East Coast Road in Kalapet, Puducherry, it is well known for its research-enriched education and serene coastal environment. Accredited with an "A+" Grade by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). It consistently ranks among the top universities in India by the NIRF.

The **Department of Ocean Studies and Marine Biology** at Pondicherry University is a premier institution located at the Port Blair Campus in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Established in 2004, it specializes in M.Sc. and Ph.D. programs utilizing the rich, diverse marine ecosystems of the region. Situated in a relatively pristine and heavily forested marine environment, it offers unmatched proximity to 572 islands, distinct coral reefs, and extensive mangrove ecosystems.

About AnSI (Anthropological Survey of India), Sri Vijaya Puaram:

The Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI) is a premier national research organization under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. Established in 1945 and headquartered in Kolkata, it is the only institution of its kind globally dedicated to pursuing holistic bio-cultural and socio-cultural anthropological research in a governmental setup. The regional center of AnSI in Andaman, established in 1951, studies the socio-cultural and biological aspects of the indigenous and settler populations of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. They maintain the Zonal Anthropological Museum in Port Blair, which offers fascinating exhibits on the paleolithic and neolithic inhabitants as well as the contemporary indigenous tribes (like the Great Andamanese, Jarawas, and Sentinelese) of the islands.

Concept Note:

The convergence of the two distinct domains of studies, i.e., oceanography with the nascent field of the Blue Humanities to interrogate the literary geographies of islands and water bodies, opens a new gateway to the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches. In the contemporary researches it is being witnessed what is termed as an “Oceanic Turn”, “Marine/Aquatic Turn” or “Blue Turn” in the humanities, wherefore the ocean, sea and other aqueous spaces are no longer treated merely as decors or metaphors but as agile, conducive sites of cultural, historical, and ecological as well as spiritual epitaph. Analyzing the concurrent synchronous and parallel shift in the field of the blue humanities and oceanography together, it is observed that oceanography has increasingly moved beyond positivist hydrography to interact with the various facets of human life associated with their aquatic bonhomie such as their social, political, and symbolic dimensions of marine and lacustrine systems. By synthesizing oceanographic data with literary and cultural analysis, this conference seeks to get the responses of such esoteric and labyrinth queries to map how islands, coastlines, and watery interiors become charged literary geographies that design anthropocentric and ecocentric worldviews with an ecoscimatic lens. Further it is also sought to discern the veracity that the deep-sea study with a thalassic focus and pelagic perspective paves a way where ingenuity coalesces the integration of seascapes and ecoscimatic imagination in literary criticism and geographical interventions simultaneously.

The Blue Humanities emerge as an urgent answer to land-centric or terracentric human studies. This approach has often centered land as the primary stage for history, politics and identity. According to scholars like Serpil Oppermann, Steve Mentz, and Elizabeth DeLoughrey, the ocean functions as a global medium that links disparate geographies, cultures, and temporalities. That understanding of the ocean — just an empty space between chunks of land, a marketplace for expanding human activity and commerce — sustains colonial, extractive and anthropocentric ways of knowing. In this environment, the Blue Humanities employs

ecocriticism, environmental studies, maritime history and postcolonial theory to emphasize the ocean as a space for memory, movement, and connections among species.

At the same time, the field of literary geographies has focused on how texts shape space, especially through the frequent depiction of islands, archipelagos, and bodies of water. James Kneale, for example, argues that fictional islands serve as unique literary spaces of ownership, separation, and change. Here, imperial desires to understand, claim, and control intersect with dreams of solitude and personal reinvention. Other scholars have built on Mikhail Bakhtin's idea of the chronotope to illustrate how islands and oceans influence narrative time, confinement, and growth. This project will build on these ideas by linking literary geographies of islands and water bodies with oceanographic models, creating a cross-disciplinary approach that connects the physical sciences and interpretive humanities.

This conference seeks to analyze the significant issues related to the gap between the scientific understanding of water bodies—rooted in hydrodynamics, thermohaline circulation, and ecological modeling—and the literary portrayal of oceans, seas, rivers, and islands as places of metaphor, memory, and myth. While oceanography increasingly acknowledges the interconnected nature of water environments, much of this complexity is missing from literary criticism. Literary criticism often views water as a purely symbolic or aesthetic element instead of a material force with differences. On the other hand, scholarship in the humanities can enhance oceanographic stories by highlighting the cultural, political, and ethical aspects of how water is mapped, described, and treated as a commodity.

This intellectual gathering seeks to trace the history of literary depictions of islands and water bodies from classical and early modern texts to contemporary ocean literature, focusing on how spatial concepts like archipelago, littoral zone, and submarine depth are created in narratives and further to analyze how oceanographic discussions and data are shaped or hidden within literary representations of the sea, including shipping routes, climate change forecasts, and ocean acidification.

This conference is also looking for having an outcome creating a theoretical framework for interpreting islands and water bodies as interconnected sites of material and meaning, drawing on critical ocean studies, Blue Humanities, and spatial literary studies and eventually, investigating the ethical and political consequences of combining oceanography and the Blue Humanities, particularly regarding the climate crisis, ocean governance, and Indigenous and postcolonial ways of knowing the ocean.

The 5th EFSLE International Conference (ICOBH 2026) aims to examine the interdisciplinary nexus of oceanography and the Blue Humanities vividly articulating the reimagining of water -not merely as a scientific object of study but as a cultural agent that shapes human experience, narrative, and value systems. Through

literary geographies of islands and water bodies, scholars can uncover pluralistic epistemologies that integrate empirical data with embodied knowledge, ethical reflection, and imaginative representation.

Being a multidisciplinary and an interdisciplinary conference, original research papers from all the streams are most welcome to discuss such grave issues largely related, but not exclusively limited, to the following sub-themes:

Sub-themes:

Oceanography, Environmental Crises and Marine Systems

1. Deep-Sea Microbiomes, Climate Feedbacks and Oceanic Narrativity
2. Marine Socio-Ecological Thresholds in Coastal Humanities
3. Oceanic Curating, Environmental Crises and Multispecies Publics/Assemblages
4. Future Oceans Adaptation, Justice and Narrative Modelling
5. Homo Aquaticus: Human–Ocean Co-Habitation as Critical Utopia
6. Ocean Narratives of Environmental Crisis vis-à-vis Climate Change
7. Ecocriticism, Marine Ecology and Climate Change
8. Oceanic Holography and Environmental Monitoring
9. Trans-disciplinary Water Ethics: An Integration of Ocean Acidification and Coral Bleaching
10. Environmental Racism, Climate Change and Coastal Vulnerability and Environmental Justice: An Ethical Discourse

Biocultural Continuities and the Inextricable Indigenous Marine Ethnoecology

1. Indigenous Knowledge Tradition (IKT), Sacred Landscapes and the Thalassophilic Bonhomie among the Tribes of the Islands
2. The Anthropology of Traditional Practices among the Onge, Shompen. Jarawa and Other Tribal Communities of Andaman & Nicobar Islands
3. Oral Traditions as Cultural Archives: Mapping Indigenous Ecological Knowledge in the Andaman and Nicobar Archipelago
4. Traditional Fishing Knowledge and Maritime Cultural Heritage among the Nicobarese and Other Island Communities
5. Ritual, Belief, and Biodiversity: A Study of Indigenous Cosmologies and Environmental Ethics in the Islands
6. Traditional Architecture and Environmental Wisdom in Indigenous Settlements of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands
7. Cultural Resilience and Environmental Change: Indigenous Responses to Ecological Disturbance in the Islands

8. Biocultural Responses to Climate and Habitat Change
9. An Ethnographic Study of Indigenous Healing Practices among the Tribal Communities of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands
10. Marine Ecology and Indigenous Biocultural Analysis with an Ethnolinguistics Approach

Oceanic Imaginaries and Literary Geographies

1. Explores Oceanic Symbolism, Memory, and Cultural Narratives
2. Intertidal Literatures and Coastal Transformations Arts and Cultural Studies
3. Maritime Isolation in Island Literatures: The Cultural Epistemologies
4. Maritime Imaginaries and Cultural Memory
5. Tsunami Echoes in Oral Epics
6. Andaman-Nicobar Tribal Sea Imaginaries: Oral Geographies of Waves Currents and Indigenous Seafaring Lore
7. Seascapes and Spatial Studies
8. Affective Geographies of Water
9. Underwater Worlds and Submarine Imaginations
10. Oceanic Epistemologies and the Contemporary Writings & Criticism

Benthic Ecology and Benthic Biology:

1. Benthic Infrastructures of Renewable Energy
2. Epistemic Bias and the "Unheeded" Benthic Data
3. Affective Life of the Deep Seafloor
4. Life Histories in the Dark: Biographies of *least-known* Benthic Species
5. Benthic Bodies as Geomorphic Agents
6. Microbial Benthos and the Ethics of Invisibility
7. Benthic Literatures and the Patchy Seascape Knowledge
8. Plankton Productivity, Fisheries and Marine Biodiversity

Speculative and Pollution-Focused Literatures

1. Quantum Oceanography in Speculative Fiction
2. Microplastic Poetics and Oceanic Waste: Literary Depictions of Plastic Pollution as Narrative Debris.
3. Hydrofeminist Readings of Ocean Currents: Gendered Flows in Climate Fiction.
4. Bioluminescent Imageries in Island Folklore – Glowing Seas as Symbols of other Worldliness.
5. Subduction Zone Mythologies – Tectonic Plate Collisions in Literary Geographies
6. Ethics and Ocean Governance
7. Marine Polution

Acoustic and Climate Oscillation

1. Acoustic Ecologies of Whale Songs – Soundscapes in Maritime Sound Studies

2. Oceanic Cryptids and Posthuman Hybrids – Mythic Sea Creatures and Cryptozoology
3. El Niño Narratives and Monsoon Literatures
4. Hydrocolonial Archives in Sunken Libraries – Lost Underwater Texts and Imperial Histories
5. Oceanic Mapping and Tribal Depth-Sounding Acoustics

Therapeutic and Microbial Writings

1. Thalassotherapy in Wellness Utopias: Sea-water Healing
2. Neutrino Detection Poetics
3. Mangrove Labyrinths and Tidal Mazes: Rhizomatic Geographies in Coastal Fiction
4. Islanders' Folklores and Oceanic Eddies: The Indigenous Narratives
5. Mesopelagic Zone Anxieties

IKS: Investigating the intersections of Oceanographic inquiry and Blue Humanities discourse within the framework of Indian Knowledge Traditions

1. Physical Oceanography in Purāṇic Seven Oceans: Descriptions of Mythical Seas in Ancient Texts Reflecting Modern Salinity and Currents
2. Oceanic Currents and Monsoon Navigation: Referring to Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* on Coastal Shipping and Wind Patterns
3. Vedic Plankton Knowledge and Biological Oceanography: *Vājasaneyi-Samhitā* - intricately articulating the Ocean Vegetation and Fauna
4. *Vinaya Piṭaka* and the Ancient Surveys of Underwater Topography, Abysses, and Continental Shelves in the Traditional Buddhist Bathymetry
5. Literary Landscapes and the Vedic Seven-Island Geography: The Sapta-Dvīpa Cosmology
6. The Jain Antecedents and the Purāṇic Tides: Myth and Maritime occurrence in *Āvaśyakasūtra*

Important Dates:

- Registration Starts on: 15 March 2026
- **Deadline for Submission of Abstracts: 15 September 2026 (Extended)**
- Intimation of Acceptance: *within 15 days after receiving the Abstract*
  (If selected, the participants may proceed with registration afterwards)
- Final Paper Submission (first draft): 30 October 2026

Notes:

- **Abstract of 300 words with 5 keywords must be mailed to- md@efsle.org**
- Mention "**ICOBH 2026**" or "**Andaman Conference**" in the subject line.
- Abstracts can be submitted through the Google form as well using this link:
  https://forms.gle/MrLTrbgax9mNJB1w7

- Please use 12 point Times New Roman and avoid footnotes.
- The full paper must be within 6000-10000 words (excluding all the references and the abstract). Use the latest MLA style of referencing.
- Selected Papers will be published in an edited volume with ISBN no. (Not in the form of conference proceedings, instead a complete edited book- ***The proposed publisher will be Bloomsbury or Springer Nature.***
- The papers selected after the initial review of first drafts will be considered for publication. Authors will be notified via email after the conference regarding the submission of revised or edited versions, if required, as the volume is intended as a post-conference publication.
- Authors are requested to attach their bio-note (in third person, not exceeding 100 words) separately.

Registration Categories:

- **The registration fee for the EFSLE members and Non-members both are given separately:**

Andaman International Conference (ICOBH 2026)
Registration Details (Non-Members)

Participants	Early Registration (Before 31st August)		Late Registration (After 31st August)	
	Registration Fee	Accommodation Charges	Registration Fee	Accommodation Charges
Faculties/Professional & Independent Scholars	INR 4000	INR 15000	INR 6000	INR 18000
Research Scholars	INR 3000	INR 12000	INR 5000	INR 15000
PG Students	INR 2000	INR 10000	INR 4000	INR 12000
Foreign Nationals	$ 400	$ 750	$ 600	$ 950
Participants Only (Not presenting paper)	INR 1000 $ 100	INR 10000 $ 750	INR 3000 $ 300	INR 12000 $ 950
Accompanying person	INR 1000 $ 100	INR 10000 $ 450	INR 4000 $ 350	INR 12000 $ 650

***Islander (A&N Islands) PG Students are exempted from any registration fee. The registration fee for the faculties and professionals is INR 2000 (Two Thousands Only).*

Andaman International Conference (ICOBH 2026)

Registration Details

EFSLE Members (For Lifetime Members only)

Participants	Early Registration (Before 31st August)		Late Registration (After 31st August)	
	Registration Fee	Accommodation Charges	Registration Fee	Accommodation Charges
Faculties / Professional & Independent Scholars	INR 650	INR 10000	INR 4000	INR 15000
Research Scholars	INR 450	INR 8000	INR 3000	INR 12000
PG Students	INR 300	INR 6000	INR 1500	INR 10000
Foreign Nationals	$ 100	$ 450	$ 350	$ 650
Participants Only (Not presenting paper)	INR 650 $ 50	INR 6000 $ 450	INR 5000 $ 250	INR 7000 $ 650
Accompanying person (Non-member)	INR 1000 $ 100	INR 8000 $ 450	INR 4000 $ 350	INR 12000 $ 650

*Note: *The Islander (A&N Islands) students (PG) are exempted from any registration fee.*

Registration Fee details available on EFSLE website.

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Mr. Anand Rao, Sri Vijaya Puram, A&N Islands

Mr. Kumar Paarth, Programme Coordinator, EFSLE, New Delhi, **9953833313**

Scan the QR code for the payment of the Registration Fee

For EFSLE Bank Account Details, Click the link:

https://www.efsle.org/efsle-account-detail/

For Detailed Information, go through this link:

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The Splendid Islands Warmly Welcome You All