*Conference Focus Area Relevant to this Proposal: \_\_Environmental education, Faith eco spirituality and eco-theology (its really justice)*

*Type of Participation Proposed: \_Academic Paper ( I am open to other ideas if relevant)*

**Proposal:**

**Ecological Justice is Social Justice:**

**The ecological journey of Jesuit Social Services.**

The work I wish to present is grounded in the twin principles articulated by Mary Graham that *law is land* and *you are not alone in the world*. These truths resonate with the cultural need to understand the unity and interconnection between the forgotten natural contract (Serres 1995) between humanity and the earth and the well-known social contract between humans.

In early 2017 I returned to Australia after working in Geneva Switzerland and was engaged by Jesuit Social Services Australia as their ecological justice project officer. My job description was to further the growth of ecological justice within the organisation. I wish to present the on going journey of this role and challenges, processes and elements of success we have encountered in bringing social justice into closer proximity with ecological justice.

Jesuit Social Services delivers services and advocates for the most marginalised in society: the homeless, incarcerated, settlement and families and youths in crisis. While their traditional focus is upon human-to-human justice in 2011 the CEO Julie Edwards began to introduce the concept and practice of ecological justice into the organisation. This developed further in 2015 when the Papal Encyclical *Laudato Si* was released where Pope Francis asked humanity to respond to both ‘the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.”

Due to Jesuit Social Services vocational work on justice and equity for the marginalised, and the time the organisation gave to ecological justice, an expansive definition of justice is emerging grounded in relational and restorative practices and inclusive of the built and natural environment. Relationships, interconnection, reconciliation and the restoration of healthy connections is at the heart of Jesuit Social Services social justice way of working, which when the view is enlarged - is the basis of ecological justice and earth ethics.

I wish to present the challenging and nourishing journey of co-creating this expansive ecological justice within a large, responsive and busy organisation where environmental and social justice are coming to be understood as inextricably linked. Due to the journey being based upon reflection, discernment, relationships and listening - I will use narrative and story telling in order to include the many voices that contribute to the emerging ethics.

**Biography**

Dr. Bronwyn Lay is a lawyer, writer and community organiser. She worked as a legal aid lawyer in Melbourne before moving to France where she completed her PhD on legal philosophy and soil at the European Graduate School in 2014. She has worked as a legal and communication consultant for international environmental NGO’s, published in a wide variety of forums and organised numerous conferences and events focused around land, soil and governance. Her book *Juris Materiarum: Empires of Earth, Soil and Dirt* is available from Apropos Press. Recently returned to Australia she currently coordinates the International Caux Dialogue on Land and Security and is the Ecological Justice Project Officer for Jesuit Social Services Australia.