



Dear Friend of the Oxford India Centre for Sustainable Development,

Welcome to the latest issue of the OICSD newsletter featuring quarterly updates on our research, scholarships and seminars.

We wrapped up another busy Hilary term at the OICSD, where we initiated new collaborations within Oxford and beyond. We hosted events with the Oxford Sustainable Finance Students' Society and the International Institute of Forecasters' UK Chapter. Our new batch of scholars made their first presentations for the OICSD Research Showcase on a wide range of topics within the paradigm of sustainable development in India, including on access, exclusion, marginality and inequality. We have a new doctorate from the OICSD on antibiotic resistance and our scholar-in-focus section will introduce you to India's first seaweed company.

Please read on for more about the Centre's latest updates on research, events and plans.

### OICSD Research Highlights

**Prof Radhika Khosla's** input as Specialist Advisor to the UK's Environmental Audit Committee report on Heat Resilience and Sustainable Cooling. The work examines the relationship between heat and health; the adequacy of current Government policies in relation to current and future need for cooling; and considered measures to be taken to increase adaptation and resilience to rising temperatures. The full report is available [here](#).

**Dr Siddharth Arora** co-authored two publications on the probabilistic forecasting. In the first paper, a machine learning approach to quantile regression foresting is used to produce probabilistic forecast of patient waiting times in an emergency department. The [second paper](#) uses similar methodology to study daily COVID-19 admissions for a local hospital trust.

**Apoorva Kulkarni** co-authored a paper for the Ornithological Applications – journal of the American Ornithological Society. The paper is titled, "Decolonizing bird knowledge: More-than-Western bird-human relations". The paper combines ornithological methods with key terms, theories and methods in social sciences to advance the understanding of traditional ecological knowledge systems. [Read it here](#).

**Dr Shobhana Nagraj** is the co-author of three publications on studying the role of medical professionals and students. The [first two publications](#) are on the service evaluation of medical support workers in the Oxford University Hospital's NHS Foundation Trust. In another [publication](#), Dr Nagraj is analysing the ethical impacts of international medical electives where local students from the UK visit low- and middle-income countries.

**Dr Anant Jani's** co-authored paper conducts a literature review of negative impacts of growing automobile culture. The paper, titled "[Car harm: A global review of automobility's harm to people and the environment](#)" is published in the Journal of Transport Geography and offers a summary of potential interventions that are ready for implementation.

**Dr Vikranth Nagaraja and Dr Anant Jani's** article is published in the journal of Health Policy and Technology. The study assesses the use of telemedicine in India after the publication of Telemedicine Guidelines, 2020. Read the article [here](#).

### OICSD Events

The term started with a collaboration with the **Oxford Sustainable Finance Students' Society**. OICSD Programme Director Dr Siddharth Arora delivered a talk on "Energy Solutions and Sustainable Finance: Trends, Opportunities and Challenges". The talk received a resoundingly positive response from the attendees as Dr Arora simplified a complex topic.



Read the detailed blog post [here](#).

We hosted the Quarterly Forecasting Forum for the **International Institute of Forecasters (UK Chapter)** in February. The day-long symposium had presentations from experts across UK institutions focusing on themes such as renewable energy scheduling, energy efficiency, studying disease outbreaks and statistics. Dr Siddharth Arora serves as the Secretary for the IIF's UK chapter.



## Collaboration alert!

We are hosting the IIF UK's Quarterly Forecasting Forum at the OICSD on 9th February.

### Agenda

13:00 - Arrival at Somerville College  
13:15 - Welcome

**13:30 - Session 1**

- James Taylor (Prof of Decision Sciences at Saïd Business School, University of Oxford), Probabilistic Forecast Aggregation with Statistical Depth.
- Xiaochun Meng (Senior Lecturer in Finance at University of Sussex Business School), Angular Combining of Forecasts of Probability Distributions.
- Elnaz Aziz (AI in Science Postdoctoral Fellow, Energy & Power Group, Engineering Science, University of Oxford), Translating Grid Substations Data into Actionable Information via Non-Intrusive Load Monitoring.

**15:00 - Break**

**15:15 - Session 2**

- Honglin Wen (Shanghai Jian Tong University, Postdoc researcher / Imperial College London, Guest Researcher), Value Oriented Forecasting for Tactical Renewable Energy Scheduling.
- Ben Lambert (Academic Director, Schmidt AI in Science, University of Oxford), Using Bayesian Nonparametrics to Estimate the Time-varying Reproduction Number in Infectious Disease Outbreaks.

17:00 - Close

### OICSD Research Showcase - Hilary 2024

Our 2023 cohort delivered their first presentations for this term's research showcase at the OICSD. The showcase is an opportunity for the OICSD community to share their ongoing research. Presentations focused on critical themes such as inequality, exclusion, environmental casteism, public policy and forest sustainability.

Bhimraj Muthu and Niharika Singh presented the concept of environmental casteism wherein marginalised communities are affected disproportionately without having any representation in the climate justice discourse. Ishani Mookherjee presented a framework on disability-selective abortions while Fahad Zuberi's research investigated the problems of access and exclusion in an Indian city. Isha Ahlawat analysed the issue of algorithmic biases and Ramakash G.S. presented an overview of forest cover and sustainability in India. Finally, MPP scholars Reema Sathe and Aanchal Saxena reflected on poverty alleviation strategies in India and reformation of agri-lending in rural India respectively.



### Sustainability Series – Lubaina Rangwala (WRI India)

Our second session in the Sustainability Series was delivered by Lubaina Rangwala. Lubaina is the Head of Urban Development and Resilience at WRI India. Her talk, "Exploring opportunities for community resilience in Mumbai's dense urban settlements" discussed the process to create the Mumbai Climate Action Plan. WRI India has been the knowledge partner with the Brihan-Mumbai Municipal Corporation and the state government to create this plan.



#### OICSD Sustainability Series

Exploring opportunities for community resilience in Mumbai's dense urban settlements



**Lubaina Rangwala**  
Program Head - Urban Development and Resilience, WRI India  
In association with Dr Radhika Khosla, Director of Research, OICSD

20th February, Tuesday  
Online (Microsoft Teams)

Link and QR code to join below (password)



### Announcements

Congratulations to our newest doctor – Dr Divya Choudhary!

Divya joined the OICSD in 2020 to read for a DPhil in Biochemistry on the Indra Gandhi Scholarship. Her DPhil investigated the mechanisms by which bacteria respond to reactive oxygen species, which are toxic molecules produced by immune cells to combat infection and during antibiotic treatment. Through a combination of modelling, experiments using single-cell microfluidics, and machine learning techniques, she devised approaches to determine the 'hidden variables' contributing to the apparent randomness in bacterial responses against stresses. She is starting a joint postdoctoral fellowship between the Harvard Medical School and the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology at Harvard University.



Bhimraj Muthu and Swapnil Tripathi have been selected for the [Bonavero Institute of Human Rights' Graduate Research Residency Programme](#). Bhimraj is reading for an MPhil in Law on the Ratanshaw Bomanji Zaiwalla Scholarship and Swapnil is the Gopal Subramaniam scholar reading for a DPhil in Law. They will continue their research in the fields of human rights, public law and the rule of law through the residency.

Aanchal Saxena has been selected as an [Impact Fellow at the Oxford SDG Impact Lab](#). This provides an opportunity for postgraduate students to deliver solutions to complex environmental and social challenges. She is pursuing Masters in Public Policy at the Blavatnik School of Government on the Elizabeth Moir Scholarship.



Professor Radhika Khosla presented at the [India Cooling Coalition's Annual Conclave](#) in New Delhi on 20<sup>th</sup> March. The presentation was titled, "Climate Action Through Sustainable Cooling: Policy Perspectives" and it discussed policies promoting passive cooling, enhancing energy efficiency and how implementation of these measures can curb cooling demand.

### Call for Papers – Education and Inequity: Perspectives from South Asia

We are collaborating with Education South Asia to host a symposium on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023. The theme is "Education and Inequity: Perspectives from South Asia". It aims to bring together graduate students, researchers and practitioners to explore these entanglements from a multidisciplinary perspective.

The deadline to submit proposals is on **5th April 2024, 23:59**.

[Details here](#)

### Scholar in focus - Gabriella D'Cruz

Gabriella is a marine conservationist based in Panjim, Goa. She graduated with an MSc Biodiversity Conservation and Management on the Indira Gandhi Scholarship from OICSD in 2017-18. She has spent the last 5 years working exclusively on seaweed in India, prior to which she worked on coral reef conservation projects and cetacean monitoring with the WWF India office.

She started The Good Ocean in 2021 which promotes native Indian seaweed for the Indian market. It is India's first seaweed food company, wild harvesting native Indian seaweed from the coast of Goa, processing it and selling it to restaurants and other companies in the food & beverage sector. Their aim is to promote the benefits of seaweed as a low carbon, local seafood that is highly nutritious.



The Good Ocean is currently focused on scaling up production, training more harvesters and researching the potential for native seaweed farm models in Goa. Gabriella's work has won her the BBC Global Youth Champion award 2021 and she was invited by the Rockefeller Foundation to be part of a roadmap exercise for encouraging seaweed as a Regenerative Aquatic Food.

Picture credits: The Good Ocean

[Click here to know more about the Good Ocean](#)

### Support the OICSD

The OICSD is supported by a network of philanthropists in India and the UK, who have enabled us to double the number of postgraduate scholarships we offer to talented Indian students. If you would like to support our mission of education and research that benefits India and the world, the Oxford India Foundation (Section 8 registered non-profit) gives donors based in India a new and tax-efficient way to support the activities of the OICSD.

For more information about making a gift to support the Centre, please contact our Director of Development Sara Kalim at: [sara.kalim@some.ox.ac.uk](mailto:sara.kalim@some.ox.ac.uk).



For regular updates on our research and events, we invite you to follow us on Twitter: [@OxIndiaCentre](https://twitter.com/OxIndiaCentre)

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