

# Savita Vijayakumar



My research practice is curious about how ideas of 'nature' and 'society' is produced and connected to one another. By drawing tools from the field of political ecology, I try to understand the relationship between knowledge and power in the process of place-making which depicts the oceans as frontiers. For many years, I have worked on public policies which affect livelihoods across fisheries, agrarian, and forest ecologies. I'm interested in the locations of political-agency and the production of resistance mounted by coastal societies. More broadly, my work speaks to the imaginaries of people's relation to places that are at the cusp of land and sea.

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## Language Proficiency

ENGLISH - Completely Fluent  
MALAYALAM - Spoken  
KANADA - Completely Fluent  
HINDI - Spoken  
TAMIL - Spoken  
FRENCH - A1

## Software Skills

MS Office  
Adobe Indesign

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## Academic History

### **MPhil in Conservation Leadership** **University of Cambridge | 2016-2017**

Awarded full scholarship:  
Cambridge Trust and INLAKS Ravisankaran Fellowship

### **Bachelor in Mass Media - Political Science and Journalism** **University of Mumbai | 2006-2009**

Graduated with Distinction

### **Fellowship for Summer School - Peace and Conflict Studies** **University of California Berkley | 2007**

Special focus on Human Rights and International Relations

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## Work Experience

### **Independent Researcher** **April 2021 - Present**

- Consultant for CCFD-Terre Solidare on Mapping the Blue Economy ecosystem of actors, power dynamics and public policies in the south and south-east Asia

### **Research Associate - The Research Collective** **November 2017 - March 2021**

- Created curriculum for 'Youth for the Coast' a training programme for early to mid-career practitioners from various fields who intend to work on the various aspects of the ocean and coast in India.

- Conceptualised two dialogues as part of the series 'Re-imagining the future: People's Agenda for Post-Covid Economy' on the theme "Blue Economy meets Green Economy" : 1. Caste and Class dynamics of land-use change and 2. Modernity and Food Production: response by women in resistance

- Conceptualised and conducted workshops for fishworker union leaders on Blue Economy, Sagarmala Port Led Development with a particular focus on law and policy changes affecting coastal fisheries in Goa, Kerala, Tamil Nadu.

\_ Provided guidance on research about Forest Rights Act and the impact of conservation policies on forest-dwelling communities

- Co-authored white paper on "Overfishing Negotiations at the WTO: Undermining Fishworker Livelihoods" as a submission to the WTO mini-ministerial meeting on fisheries subsidies held in New Delhi in March 2018

## **CoFounder - EARTHCOLAB.COM**

### **2016 - Present**

- Developed curriculum and taught two courses for the University of Wollongong - "Geographies of Change".

2014 course on "Islands of change" with masters students of Human Geography in the Andaman Islands.  
2019 course on "Writing the Ocean" with masters students of Human Geography and Creative writing in the Phang Nga Bay, Thailand.

- Developed curriculum and taught on the course "Ecosystem in change: post-catastrophic place making on the Coromandel Coast" with University of Arts, Helsinki for masters students in "Space & Time Department"

2015 - 2019.

- Curator of project 'Swamp Storytelling' which aims to investigate the wetlands of Sweden and India. By moving between the border of science and art, the project aimed at bringing a deeper insight into contemporary art production, sociopolitical thought processes, and the scientific method.

## **Research Associate - NATURE CONSERVATION FOUNDATION**

### **2015 - 2016**

- To build strategies for conservation intervention by mapping socio-cultural, economic and political fabric of the Lakshadweep islands that influences the fisheries. This is part of a larger project - 'Coping with Catastrophe' - Supporting Reef Resilience in the Face of Changing Fishing Practices in the Lakshadweep Islands.

## **Public Policy Analyst - ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ENVIRONMENT TEAM**

### **2012 - 2015**

- Understanding fisheries governance, conflict and resource management in South Andamands with special focus on schemes and subsidies.

- Represented ANET and developed policy proposals for state level policy making committees such as State Board for Wildlife, Coastal Zone Management Authority, Administrator's Advisory Council etc.

- Liasoned between Andaman & Nicobar Secretariat and experts from network of science institutions, ecologists to channel policy recommendations at relevant points of decision making within the island administration.

Documented Andaman & Nicobar Island's environment law, policy and governance framework. Mapped fisheries governance framework in the Andaman Islands.

Critically examined ANET's role within the committees and documented decision making processes within the Administration.

## **Senior Research Analyst - INFORMED VOTER PROJECT**

### **2008 - 2012**

Developed methodology to track the performance of elected representatives - Members of Parliament (MP) , Members of Legislative Assembly (MLA), and Municipal Corporator.

Created a 'Manifesto Promises vs Constituency Needs' and 'Parliamentary Questions Record' analysis. framework • Dissected and analysed manifestos of 3 major political parties for Municipal Elections '12

Trained volunteers to collect and analyse data, create reports.