



Biodiversity Treaty Maintains Business as Usual by Removing Rights of Nature from Proposed Framework

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NEW YORK, NY—On July 12, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat released the “first draft” of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, updating the “zero draft” released in August 2020. Amongst the significant changes is the removal of the Rights of Nature as an “enabling condition” of the framework.

Specifically, the “zero draft” of the post-2020 framework had added the following approach to implement the framework: “Consider and recognize, where appropriate, the rights of nature.” The newest, 2021, report has no such mention. At the time, the CBD became the first international environmental treaty to consider adopting the Rights of Nature.

The post-2020 global biodiversity framework will be on the docket at the 15th meeting of the “Conference of the Parties” to the CBD (COP-15), where it will be up for potential adoption. COP-15 is currently scheduled for October 2021 in Kunming, China.

The CBD framework seeks to implement broad-based action to transform society’s relationship with biodiversity to fulfill a vision of living in harmony with Nature by 2050. Rights of Nature is seen by many as an essential legal tool to live in harmony with Nature and has been adopted by dozens of governments across the world, particularly in Latin America.

In 2008, Ecuador became the first country in the world to constitutionally recognize the “Rights of Nature,” thereby granting basic rights to Nature, just as humans possess rights. Globally, Rights of Nature is now recognized to some extent in over a dozen countries, including nationally in Bolivia, in several Mexican states, and at the local and Tribal levels in the United States. Various national court decisions over the past two years have also established the Rights of Nature, including landmark “rights of rivers” decisions in Colombia and Bangladesh.

“Rights of Nature is the transformative policy action the post-2020 framework needs to fulfill its goals and protect biodiversity. We urge Parties to the CBD to restore this enabling condition.” said **Pella Thiel, Coordinator of Rights of Nature Sweden.**

“Recognizing the Rights of Nature in the biodiversity convention is a very important component and a milestone for the protection of the natural environment. Its deletion makes us question whether governments are sincere about their pledge to live in harmony with Nature.” said **Doris Ragetti, co-founder of Rights of Mother Earth.**

“The Parties to the CBD took a huge step backwards by deleting the first-ever mention of the Rights of Nature in an international environmental treaty. Now is the time to act boldly in defense of the planet, not to continue with ‘business as usual’,” said **Grant Wilson, Executive Director of Earth Law Center.**

“Youth from all around the world are at the forefront of advancing counter norms such as the Rights of Nature. By rejecting the Rights of Nature, the Parties to the CBD have demonstrated they are out of touch with those future generations who will inherit our planet in a state of emergency,” said **Hana Begovic, Director and Coordinator of Earth Advocacy Youth.**

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Earth Law Center (www.earthlawcenter.org) is a 501(c)(3) organization that works to transform the law to recognize and protect nature’s inherent rights to exist, thrive, and evolve. This includes advancing the inherent rights of rivers through initiatives with local partners to secure rights recognition.

Rights of Nature Sweden (www.naturensrattigheter.se) is working with Rights of Nature and Earth jurisprudence as systemic tools for the transition to a society in harmony with nature. We arrange the [Earth Rights Conference](#) as a platform for these ideas.

Rights of Mother Earth is a global movement campaign for the adoption of a Declaration of Rights of Mother Earth by the United Nations, to complement the Human Rights Declaration. You can sign and share the petition at: www.RightsofMotherEarth.com

Earth Advocacy Youth (<https://www.earthadvocacy-youth.org>) is a coalition of creative, daring, and skilled young professionals working to identify and apply bold ecocentric solutions and practices through youth-led policy, education and legal action. Read the joint brief advocating for the Rights of Nature and submitted to the CBD by the above parties here: <https://www.earthlawcenter.org/s/CBD-Rights-of-Nature.pdf>