



Statement of the participants to the International Annual Conference on the Rights of Nature, of the Geneva Forum 2019

We, the Participants of the 8th International Conference on Rights of Nature for Peace and Sustainable Development, including members of the UN Harmony with Nature Programme,

ARE AWARE THAT:

- (1) progress has been made by the United Nations in the area of human rights (UDHR), the rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (DRPOPWRA), and sustainable development (UNCED),
- (2) the UN recognised Mother Earth Day in 2009 and initiated the UN Harmony with Nature Programme,
- (3) in 2010 a draft Universal Declaration on the Rights of Mother Earth (UDRME) was adopted by the World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth in Cochabamba, Bolivia,
- (4) IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2012 decided (Res 100) to "promote the development of a Universal Declaration of the Rights of Nature",
- (5) many cities, countries, courts and local communities have recognised Rights of Nature during the last decade,
- (6) civil society is mobilizing for adoption of a Declaration on Rights of Mother Earth by the UN via a global petition, which has collected over 300 000 votes as of today, intending to reach 1 million signatures,
- (7) despite all these actions, the UN Decade of Biodiversity 2011 - 2020 ends with ecosystems more threatened than ever on a global scale;

HAVE HEARD FROM PRESENTATIONS AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THAT:

- (7) We are an inseparable part of Nature (Mother Earth), which determines our existence.
- (8) We are part of Mother Earth, not superior to or separate from her; we must seek to live in harmony with Nature.
- (9) The UN can no longer afford to separate the protection of Mother Earth from its mandate of peace keeping.
- (10) To achieve environmental justice, we must recognise the interdependence of human and non-human life.
- (11) Damage done by humans to Nature must be recognised as a crime against Nature and against humanity by adopting a law of ecocide.
- (12) Balancing human rights with the rights of Nature is necessary to implement Agenda 2030, including reaching the Sustainable Development Goals.

THEREFORE, WE URGE:

1. The State Parties of the Convention on Biodiversity to ensure that the post-2020 Biodiversity framework is based on the rights of Nature to exist, thrive, regenerate, evolve, and be restored.
2. The UN to adopt a Universal Declaration on the Rights of Mother Earth as a crucial and essential step towards a sustainable future.
3. All States to urgently take concrete measures to ensure that present and future generations can live well in harmony with Nature by implementing Rights of Nature in all national legal systems as well as educational programmes.
4. To make the adoption of a Declaration of Rights of Mother Earth a permanent topic on the agenda of ECOSOC and the General Assembly.

Geneva, 10 December 2019.

¹ Statement drafted by Colin D. Robertson, Michèle L. Perrin-Taillat, Doris Ragetti, James Mager, Pella Thiel, Fallon J Hayes, Jawaria kanwal Chaudhary, Arci Pasanen and Vanessa Hasson