



WCEL
WORLD COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL LAW
COMMISSION MONDIALE DU DROIT DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT
COMISSÃO MUNDIAL DE DIREITO DO AMBIENTE



Expert Consultation on Rights of Nature

UNEP, IUCN WCEL and UNDP Thought Leadership Initiative

25 – 26 September 2023
Conference room 10, UNEP Headquarters
Nairobi, Kenya

Agenda

Day 1: 25 September 2023

- 9:00 - 9:30 Opening session**
Welcome by Patricia Mbote, Director, Law Division, UNEP
Introduction of participants

Moderation: Andy Raine, Head, Frontiers in Environmental Law Unit, Law Division
- 9:30 - 10:00 Overview of the workshop objectives and agenda**
By Philippe Cullet, Chair of the IUCN-WCEL Rights of Nature Task Force

Moderation: Andy Raine, Head, Frontiers in Environmental Law Unit, Law Division
- 10:00 - 11:15 Session 1 - Unpacking the concept of rights of nature**
This session aims to explore and clarify the concept of rights of nature. The discussion will include examination of different interpretations and perspectives surrounding rights of nature around the world and their implications for environmental law and governance. The discussion may also include exploration of key elements of rights of nature.

The session will begin with a short introductory presentation, followed by an open discussion.

Moderation: Elvin Nyunkuri, Professor, University of Nairobi, Kenya

Presentation: Mihnea Tănăsescu, Research Professor, University of Mons, Belgium
- 11:15 - 11:45 Coffee break**



11:45 – 13:00 Session 2 - Legal personality for nature

This session will focus on the legal personality to nature by exploring various types of rights that can be granted to nature, such as the right to exist, thrive, and regenerate. The discussion may also address various elements that can be encompassed by rights of nature, including ecosystems, species, biodiversity, natural spaces, rivers, and oceans. Furthermore, the session may examine the impacts of granting legal personality to nature on the environment, society, and the economy.

The session will begin with a short introductory presentation, followed by an open discussion.

Moderation: Victor David, Research Fellow, Centre IRD de Nouméa, New Caledonia, France

Presentation: Maša Kovič Dine, Assistant Professor of International Law, Faculty of Law University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch break

14:00 – 15:15 Session 3 - Different models, representation and governance

This session aims to examine existing models for the governance of rights of nature and their potential adaptation. The discussion will explore different frameworks such as the public trust doctrine, human rights, and procedural rights as potential avenues for effective representation. The session may also delve into different forms of guardianship and discuss the roles and responsibilities of various actors, including states, subnational governments, civil society organizations, and Indigenous Peoples organizations.

The session will begin with a short introductory presentation, followed by an open discussion.

Moderation: Grant Wilson, Executive Director, Earth Law Center, USA

Presentation: Hugo Echeverría, Attorney at Law and Doctor of Jurisprudence granted by Pontificia Universidad Católica de Quito, Ecuador

15:15 – 15:45 Coffee break

15:45 – 17:00 Session 4 - Rights of nature and other related issues

The discussion of the session will focus on the interconnections between rights of nature and other pertinent environmental law issues. The discussion may explore the relationship between the rights of nature and the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the rights of future generations, and the concept of ecocide. The session is designed to examine



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how and if rights of nature can complement and enhance the advancement of relevant issues.

The session will begin with a short introductory presentation, followed by an open discussion.

Moderation: Guy Ngay Kalasi, Professor, University of Kinshasa-ex-Lovanium, DRC

Presentations: David Boyd (video message), Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment & Pella Thiel, Co-founder End Ecocide Sweden, Sweden

17:30 **Welcome cocktail in the evening,** Delegates Restaurant, UN Complex

Day 2: 26 September 2023

9:00 - 9:30 **Recap of Day 1 and overview of Day 2**
By Andy Raine, Head, Frontiers in Environmental Law Unit, Law Division

9:30 – 11:00 **Session 5 - Harmony with nature and rights of nature**
This session aims to explore the relationship between harmony with nature and rights of nature, including discussion on perceived and actual differences between these framings. The discussion may include examination of the intersections, commonalities, and divergences between these concepts. The session is expected to foster a deeper understanding of how harmony with nature and rights of nature can contribute to environmental governance and sustainability.

The session will begin with a short introductory presentation, followed by an open discussion.

Moderation: Collins Odote, Professor, University of Nairobi, Kenya

Presentation: Maria Mercedes Sanchez, Coordinator of the UN Harmony with Nature Programme, UN

11:00 – 11:30 **Coffee break**

11:30 – 13:00 **Session 6 - Effectiveness of rights of nature in practice**
This session is designed to provide an opportunity to share lessons learned from existing rights of nature regimes around the world and discuss good practices. The discussion may include analysis of successes and challenges encountered in recognizing, implementing and enforcing rights of nature. The session may also



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explore how and if different processes and framings in the recognition of rights of nature have any implications in the effective implementation of rights of nature.

The session will begin with a short introductory presentation, followed by an open discussion.

Moderation: Tianbao Qin, Professor, Wuhan University, People's Republic of China

Presentation: Melinda Janki, International Environmental Lawyer, Guyana

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch break

14:00 – 15:00 Session 7 – Open session: other issues

This session aims to address additional relevant topics that have not been discussed in the previous sessions.

Moderation: Cormac Cullinan, Director of Wild Law Institute, South Africa

15:00 – 15:30 Coffee break

15:30 – 16:30 Session 8 – Development of the Joint Guidance Document

This session aims to provide specific inputs for the development of the Joint Guidance Document on Rights of Nature. The discussion will center on the scope, objective, direction and Joint Guidance Document as well as its implementation and dissemination strategies.

Remote presentation on the More than Human Rights (MOTH) Initiative by César Rodríguez-Garavito, Director, Earth Rights Advocacy Clinic & Future of Rights Program

Discussion led by Patricia Mbote and Philippe Cullet

16:30 – 17:00 Closing