

Earth Jurisprudence

Reconnecting with the laws and lore of the Earth

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Calling for a paradigm shift to Earth Jurisprudence at the UN General Assembly

May 2017

Dear <<First Name>>,

We were delighted to have the opportunity to discuss Earth Jurisprudence at the United Nations Headquarters, at a special event on Friday 21 April - the 7th Interactive Dialogue of the UN General Assembly on Harmony with Nature. See below for more detail. The dialogue was orchestrated by Maria Mercedes Sanchez, the UN's dynamic focal point for Harmony with Nature. It was streamed live and can be [viewed online](#), and we especially recommend the compelling interventions by Sr. Fernando Huanacuni, Bolivia's Minister for Foreign Affairs!

April was also an exciting month with two events in Europe. One, the [Earth Rights Conference](#) in Sweden, brought together a range of activists, academics and environmentalists and produced a declaration which not only drew on European sources, but also brought in the UN's Harmony with Nature initiative. The second, at the European Parliament in Brussels, held by [Nature's Rights](#), drew together parliamentarians, academics and featured a talk from IUCN's Luc Bas, and was largely in support of the initiative to get an [EU Directive](#) on Rights of Nature.

Media interest has been raised these last few weeks over three precedents in Rights of Nature, with the intrinsic rights of rivers in New Zealand, India and Colombia being recognised. We provide some links, below, and invite you to share your views - do contact us at this email: [earthjurisprudence\[at\]gaiafoundation.org](mailto:earthjurisprudence[at]gaiafoundation.org).

Also on the horizon, the Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature (GARN) is planning a Tribunal to coincide with the next round of climate change negotiations, at the UNFCCC in Bonn, in November. European allies who are in a position to help with the logistics for the event are asked to [please contact GARN](#).

Other top news is that Gaia will be running a new three-year, in-depth training course in Africa on Earth Jurisprudence. July will see the graduation of African's first group of EJ practitioners, at a special ceremony by Lake Langano in Ethiopia. At the same time, we will welcome a second group of African EJ practitioners to embark on their 3-year journey. More news on this and other plans for growing the African EJ movement in the next newsletter!

Warmly,

Liz, Fiona, Joseph and the Gaia team



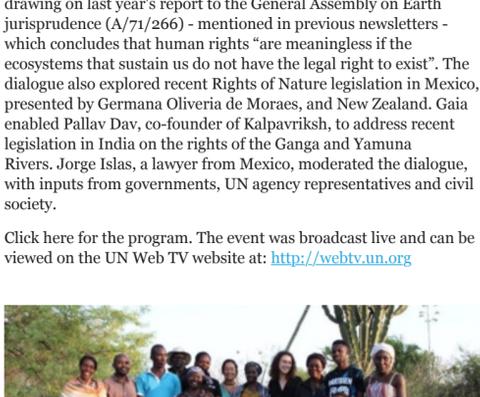
7th UN dialogue on Harmony with Nature

The [7th Interactive Dialogue of the UN General Assembly on Harmony with Nature](#), held in celebration of Mother Earth Day, had 'Earth Jurisprudence' as its overall theme.

Liz Hosken, Gaia's Director, was an invited panellist, alongside Ministers from Bolivia and Ecuador. She spoke about Gaia's journey in promoting Earth Jurisprudence and our 'trainings for transformation' with communities, civil society and change-makers across Africa - a contribution to strengthening the global movement for transformation from an anthropocentric to an Earth-centred paradigm.

Other panellists included Linda Sheehan and Klaus Bosselman, drawing on last year's report to the General Assembly on Earth Jurisprudence (A/71/266) - mentioned in previous newsletters - which concludes that human rights "are meaningless if the ecosystems that sustain us do not have the legal right to exist". The dialogue also explored recent Rights of Nature legislation in Mexico, presented by Germana Oliveria de Moraes, and New Zealand. Gaia enabled Pallav Dav, co-founder of Kalpavriksh, to address recent legislation in India on the rights of the Ganga and Yamuna Rivers. Jorge Islas, a lawyer from Mexico, moderated the dialogue, with inputs from governments, UN agency representatives and civil society.

Click here for the program. The event was broadcast live and can be viewed on the UN Web TV website at: <http://webtv.un.org>



'Trainings for Transformation' with communities in Uganda

In March, Gaia joined [NAPE](#) in Uganda's Albertine Rift for a series of exchanges, dialogues and trainings with rural communities, to strengthen cultural governance systems to revive sacred natural sites and indigenous seed diversity.

We appreciate the inspiring women farmers, sacred natural site custodians and community animators who shared their enthusiasm and commitment for restoring their knowledge and culture with us and one another! [Enjoy a photo reportage on the community trainings](#).

Earth Jurisprudence is the philosophy and practice that recognises the Earth as lawful and ordered. We humans are embedded in her living processes, and our actions should be guided by the primary laws of the Earth.



News Highlight: African Resolution on Sacred Natural Sites

Some excellent news to share - the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights (ACHPR) closed its 60th Session and adopted a new Resolution on the Protection of Sacred Natural Sites and Territories. The resolution was drafted by Gaia, the African Biodiversity Network and other partners last November, and draws from our 2015 report ['Call to the African Commission for Legal Recognition of Sacred Natural Sites and Territories and their Customary Governance Systems'](#).

For Africa, it means there is a legal basis to start lobbying for better conservation and governance of sacred natural sites within national policy frameworks.

Read more: [Read more](#).

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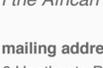
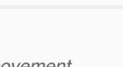
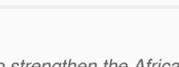
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Working together, to strengthen the African Earth Jurisprudence movement.

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