



International Rights of Nature Symposium

Sept 27th-28th, 2018 - Quito, Ecuador

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

INTERNATIONAL RIGHTS OF NATURE SYMPOSIUM IN QUITO, ECUADOR

QUITO, Ecuador - From September 27th to September 28th, 2018, the **Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature (GARN)**, along with its global partners, will hold the **International Rights of Nature Symposium** to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the Rights of Nature in Ecuador, at the Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar.

Ecuador was the first country to recognize the Rights of Nature in its Constitution through the ratification of a referendum by the people in September 2008. As Natalia Greene, member of the Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature, and President of CEDENMA states: "Ten years ago, Ecuador gave a bold and important step for humanity and the planet, finally recognizing that we are all part of nature, and that nature should be treated as a person we protect and not as an object we exploit." Since then, at least seven countries have recognized the inherent rights of and legal standing for nature in their legal systems, including dozens of ordinances. This Symposium will commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the Ecuadorian ratification, analyze the history and current status of the Rights of Nature movement globally, and determine the next steps for greater recognition of Nature's inherent rights. As Fiona Wilton of the Gaia Foundation explains, "Earth-centred values and practices, including customary laws and indigenous rights, are being undermined at an alarming rate. This International Symposium in Quito brings together global voices to celebrate the movement that nurtures the rights of all components of Nature - the right to be, to right habitat, and the right to fulfil their role in the ever-renewing processes of our Mother Earth."

In order to ensure an environmentally sustainable future, humans must reorient themselves from an exploitative and ultimately self-destructive relationship with nature, to one that honors the deep interrelation of all life and contributes to the health and integrity of the natural environment by recognizing its intrinsic rights. "Climate change is the Earth's way of letting us know we are out of balance with the system or laws of the Earth," says Shannon Biggs, GARN Executive Committee member and Director of US-based Movement Rights. "Rights of nature is about transforming human law and culture to be in alignment with natural laws."

During this two-day event, attendees will hear from professors, legal experts, indigenous leaders, activists, economists, government officials, artists, authors, and ecologists from 20 different countries and 9 indigenous nations on 12 different panels and roundtables focusing on topics including the *Judicial Comparative Analysis of Rights of Nature in Ecuador and in the World*, the *Perspective of Indigenous Peoples and Civil Society Organizations*, *Examples of the Application of the Rights of Nature in the World*, and many others.

According to Osprey Orielle Lake, Founder of the Women's Earth and Climate Action Network (WECAN) and GARN Executive Committee member, "To truly address climate disruption and socio-ecological degradation globally, we must stop the financialization and commodification of our sacred living Earth. For this, Rights of Nature offers us a solid path forward and is a vital solution to the great struggles of our time. The Symposium in Ecuador, the first country in the world to adopt Rights of Nature into their constitution, is a landmark event in the movement to change how we are living with each other and Mother Earth." This timely Symposium seeks to discuss these critical global concerns and analyze how recognizing the Rights of Nature can address such issues.



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As Tom BK Goldtooth, Executive Committee member of GARN and Executive Director of the Indigenous Environmental Network explains, "Indigenous prophecies tell us that life on Mother Earth is in danger and coming to a time of great transformation. As Indigenous Peoples, we are telling the world that we must live in peace with Mother Earth, with nature, and the need for systemic change of jurisprudence that treats nature and Mother Earth as a fundamental, rights bearing entity that has consciousness and personality." Please join us from September 27-28, 2018 at this historic Symposium where global experts will explore how these Indigenous wisdoms and philosophies can serve as the framework for addressing the most pressing issues of our time.

For more information about this historic event, please visit <https://rightsofnaturesymposium.com/>. The event can be live-streamed from [International Rights of Nature Symposium 2018](#).

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The Global Alliance for Rights of Nature (GARN) is a network of organizations and individuals committed to the universal adoption and implementation of legal systems that recognize, respect, and enforce "Rights of Nature" and to making the idea of Rights of Nature an idea whose time has come.

For more about the GARN, please visit <https://therightsofnature.org/>.

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