

## UNIVERSAL DECLARATION

### of the Rights of Trees

- *Whereas* disregard and contempt for many ecosystems have resulted in irreversible changes in the Earth System which have outraged the conscience of humankind,
- *Whereas* the advent of a world in which biotic and abiotic factors are endowed with fundamental rights and freedoms has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,
- *Whereas* Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of rights of forest ecosystems and their fundamental freedoms,
- *Whereas* a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this declaration,
- *Taking into account* the courageous decisions of individual governments to bestow legal personhood on non-human entities within their sovereign national jurisdiction, including the Ganges and Yamuna rivers in India, the Whanganui River in New Zealand and the Colombian Amazon, Invoking the declaration of Ecuador to enshrine the rights of Pachamama,
- *Declaring* that the wellbeing of humankind and the wellbeing of forests are inseparably linked,

Therefore THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF TREES as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance.

#### *Article 1*

All trees have the legal right to exist, flourish and evolve.

#### *Article 2*

Every tree has the right to recognition everywhere as having legal rights. No distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a forest belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

#### *Article 3*

Violations of rights established under this convention shall be prosecuted before the International Court for the Rights of Forest Ecosystems.