

**12th Interactive Dialogue of the General Assembly on Harmony with Nature to  
Commemorate International Mother Earth Day - 24 April 2023**

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It's an honour to be here and I am thankful to the General Assembly for the invitation to dialogue, and to represent the Centre for Access to Justice and Inclusion, Anglia Ruskin University, United Kingdom at the 12th Interactive Dialogue of the General Assembly on Harmony with Nature to Commemorate International Mother Earth Day, 24 April 2023.

Ecological justice is achievable only if there is an adequate focus on the representation of the Rights of Nature to prevent anthropocentrism, promote ecocentrism, and put a stop to the depiction of the Rights of Nature as the rights of humans to a healthy environment. In as much as the advancement of ecocentrism is important for ecological justice, an earth-centred ground for the representation of ecosystems as legal persons to surmount the pressure of anthropocentric notions is paramount.

Focus on the intrinsic value of Nature (non-anthropocentric), and not its instrumental value (anthropocentric), goes a long way in developing the responsibilities of the representatives of ecosystems as legal persons for ecological justice. This is to guarantee representing the best interests of ecosystems and not personal or human interests; and bring about ecological justice and the protection of the Rights of Nature effectively.

A high-level meeting of the "Earth Assembly" will bring about an opportunity to have a central or build standard criteria for an earth-centred representation which the proposed representatives must conform to. To answer the questions on the notions of responsibilities (of representatives and other stakeholders) in the development of an earth-centred paradigm, these meetings will enhance learning about the divergent perspectives of Member States on laws which include legislations, constitutional laws, and case laws from different countries (including indigenous peoples and local communities) which recognise the Rights of Nature and harmonise these perspectives to deduce what will work as effective and standard principles.

High-impact research cannot be overstressed.

Regular dialogues, conferences, workshops can be held at local, regional, and national levels for justiciability and inclusivity. Attendance could be hybrid- both virtual and physical- to give every stakeholder the opportunity to contribute their perspectives as efforts towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development goals. There could also be different committees set up to achieve different objectives in advance of the meetings. These objectives, if from different countries and communities, can be compared to determine a

standard criterion that works globally. A track of these dialogues or meetings which would have a potential impact on achieving ecological justice and the implementation of 2030 sustainable development, should be kept to enhance and document the role of collective actions including those of Indigenous peoples and local communities.

Overall, it is pertinent to have the “Earth Assembly”- a team of Rights of Nature stakeholders, scientists, scholars and researchers with interdisciplinary perspectives and ideas from different countries in the world to dialogue on promoting an earth-centred paradigm and holistic approaches to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and beyond. “Teamwork always makes the dream work”.