

Rights of Nature Conference, Geneva, 11-12 December 2017

Lisa Mead – Earth Law Alliance / Ecological Law & Governance Association / Earth Trusteeship

I would like to highlight 3 different initiatives that some of you may be interested to learn more about and get involved in:-

First, the **Earth Law Alliance**. I have been the custodian, or primary steward of Earth Law Alliance since 2012. It is a networking and publicity platform for people who are already actively working on Earth Law initiatives. Rights of Nature is of course included in the broader definition of “Earth Law”. The Earth Law Alliance exists to support the people who are helping to accelerate the development of laws and governance systems that recognise the interdependence of all life.

The Earth Law Alliance has a public Facebook page, which is reaching around 2500 people. There is also a Closed Facebook page, which anyone with a sincere interest in Earth Law developments can join and post items to. You would need to contact me by email first to join the Closed page.

As always, volunteers are needed to run this kind of venture, so if anyone here is interested in getting involved in developing the Earth Law Alliance, please speak to me later.

Next I would like to tell you a little about the **Ecological Law & Governance Association or ELGA**, which was formally launched in Siena in October of this year. ELGA is the brainchild of Professors Klaus Bosselmann and Massimiliano Montini. They put forward the first draft of

ELGA's founding document, the Oslo Manifesto, to the IUCN Ethics Committee in Oslo in June 2016 and it has been ratified by several hundred environmental law academics and practitioners around the world since then.

In essence, ELGA is intended to be a network of academics, professionals and organisations that are committed to tackling the causes, and not just the symptoms, of global environmental degradation. ELGA wants to develop law and governance from a wide ecological perspective, rather than from a narrow economic, utilitarian and anthropocentric perspective. ELGA is very much in sympathy with Earth Law and Rights of Nature approaches, and I see it as the next step in bringing our kind of thinking further into mainstream circles.

And lastly, **Mission LifeForce** is an international movement that supports people who protect Mother Earth. This is a really interesting and innovative initiative. Basically, you can sign up on its website to be an "Earth Trustee". It costs 5 Euros, or as much as you want to donate. In signing up, you receive the Earth Protectors Trust Fund document, which has been notarised or apostilled in almost every country of the world. If you are an environmental activist or defender of Mother Earth, and you are standing against environmental destruction, and if you ever got into trouble with the authorities because of your activities, this trust document could be used as part of your defence. The court would have to consider it, because it is a legally recognised document in most countries. This initiative is also a crowdfunding campaign, because the donations it collects raises funds for small, climate-vulnerable States to advance Ecocide law.

What is interesting is that this document has been legally validated right across the globe, which is something that has never been done before.