



Declaration of the Rights of Water

PREAMBLE

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and diversity of all substances, beings, things, systems and assemblages of the above (from now on each item in this list will be referred to as “*Units*”), including Water, as well as recognition of their equal and inalienable rights, are the foundation of life, justice, and freedom;

Whereas disregard and contempt for the rights of Water have resulted in barbarous ecologic and historical acts, and the advent of environments in which all Units shall enjoy freedom of agency and development and freedom from abuse of any kind is the highest aspiration;

Whereas it is essential that Water rights should be protected by metaphysical norms, to compel humans to stop abusing of what they consider object while, in fact, Water is subject of an autonomous life: not merely matter, but agent, whose power and being are absolute and independent of human existence and action;

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of relations between humans, societies, and nations, today imposing arbitrarily upon Water, which instead should be part of a symmetric relationship with humans and all Units;

Whereas allowing humans to claim property on Water means allowing it to be considered as matter, means of survival and subsistence, thus depriving it of identity;

Whereas the binary and hierarchical division into *living* and *non-living* things is insufficient and exclusive in the description of the ontological Units, which include all living and non-living substances, beings, things, systems, and assemblages of the above;

Whereas all life and ecosystems as we know them depend on, benefit from, and interact with Water;



Whereas science and philosophy have reaffirmed their faith in the fundamental rights of Water, in the dignity and worth of nature as a whole, in the equal rights of all Units and have determined to promote progress and better standards of life in larger freedom and equilibrium among them;

Whereas humans, identified as the main culprits of this deprivation of rights, have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation and negotiation with nature and with non-humans, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of Water rights and fundamental freedoms for all Units;

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge with respect to all Units;

Whereas the current dominant economic model does not take into account the - often disastrous - implications of its work on environments and on the Units;

Whereas human development - social, scientific, cultural and technological – has been possible thanks to Water, thus developing a relationship of mutual support between Water and humans, which is still at play today;

Since rights and freedoms originate with existence;



DECLARATION

1. Water is entitled to specific rights and freedoms.
2. Water has the right to identity: complex, multifaceted, and associated with its characteristics (physical, chemical, biological).
3. All forms of Water are equal with respect to this Declaration. Ergo, all forms of Water are entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind: in free form, in association with other Units, and in any state and phase. All forms of water are therefore equal before the law – non-scientific, scientific, and technological laws included - and are entitled, without any discrimination, to equal protection and recognition.
4. Water is a historical, political, geographical, social, and cultural agent characterized by vitality and complexity. Any classification or description of Water that contradicts this definition to justify or legitimize, directly or indirectly, the violation of the fundamental Water rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration shall be prohibited.
5. Political, juridical or international boundaries have no value in establishing distinctions between forms of Water. Furthermore, no distinction shall be established on the basis of the territory in which Water is found during its cycles and movements. The rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration shall be considered valid and applicable according to the principle of non-territoriality.
6. Water has the right to transform, react, change status, break and reform, bind and associate with other Units, be they human or non-human, without any limitation.
7. Water has the right to participate in the transformation, change, alteration of the territory, of the elements, or of any Unit without limitation of quality and quantity. Water has the right to join in and contribute to the natural life of the environments, of the Units, be they human or non-human.



8. Water has the right to be utilized by the territory and by any Unit for subsistence and development, according to the principles of respect, fairness, legality, and sustainability.
9. In its life, cycles, movements, interactions, no forms of Water shall be subjected to interferences that contradict the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration. The use of Water shall be compatible with the right of Water to the maximum freedom of movement and permanence in every territory and place, as well as the reproduction of its own cycles.
10. Water has the right to be offered and exchanged in the context of agreements aimed at respecting its development and that of other Units, and in compliance with the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration.
11. Water has the right to a quality sufficient to guarantee its own health and well-being, as well as those of environment and of any Unit, with respect especially to dissolved or suspended substances, temperature, and physico-chemical characteristics.
12. Water is intrinsically free: Water shall not be subject or matter of commodification and privatization, as this would oppose the commitment of cooperation and balance between the Units, be they human or non-human.
13. Any system or activity that exercises an asymmetrical power of utilization of Water, produces a classification of properties and prerogatives on Water, or implies its discrimination, abuse or devaluation shall be prohibited.
14. Any system or activity towards Water that follows a logic of extraction and that has the sole purpose of accumulating wealth of any form, including Water itself, shall be prohibited. Any system or activity that arbitrarily holds or displaces Water for purposes that contradict even in part the rights and freedom set forth in this Declaration shall be prohibited.
15. The use or manipulation of Water that cause the isolation, oppression, or damage - voluntary or involuntary, direct or indirect - of other Units shall be



prohibited. Furthermore, water shall not be used as an instrument of extortion, intimidation, or coercion.

17. All forms of Water are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination that violates the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, as well as against any incitement to such discrimination.

18. Water has the right to legal representatives who will be entrusted with the task of protecting its rights and freedoms. If acts are carried out that violate the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, these representatives may appeal to competent impartial tribunals, scientific and non-scientific.

19. No kind of accusation, criminal or otherwise, may be made to Water. Water cannot be accused of a crime, made guilty of commissive and omissive wrongful conduct, or condemned.

20. Any system or activity that limits or undermines the rights and freedoms of any Unit and that involves the occurrence or the use of Water in any of its forms, shall be considered a violation of the rights and freedoms of Water itself.

21. Water has the right to a natural, scientific, technical, and administrative order through which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

22. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any Unit or system, be they human or non-human, any right to engage in activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.