

About The Right Livelihood College

The Right Livelihood College (RLC) is a global capacity building initiative of the Right Livelihood Award Foundation. It aims to harness and spread the knowledge and experience of Laureates of the Right Livelihood Award, popularly known as the "Alternative Nobel Prize".

It does this through promotion of education, research, public understanding and practical activities which:

- Contribute to a global ecological balance
- Are aimed at eliminating material and spiritual poverty
- Contribute to lasting peace and justice in the world

The Right Livelihood College (RLC)'s global secretariat is hosted by the Universiti Sains Malaysia's Centre for Policy Research and International Studies (CenPRIS). The RLC also has partner campuses at Lund University, Sweden, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, and the University of Bonn, Germany.



The Right Livelihood College

A university and change-makers initiative for disseminating and strengthening wisdom and skills for a positive future

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MOTHER EARTH

Penang, Malaysia



Founded in 1969 in Penang, Malaysia, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) offers 800 courses at undergraduate and postgraduate levels to approximately 20,000 students. The university has currently 24 schools conducting academic programmes and more than 20 centres of excellence specialising in research activities. In 2008, USM was chosen as Malaysia's APEX University - Accelerated Programme for Excellence. As the chosen Apex University, USM will be accelerated for excellence and nurtured for world class standing amongst the world's universities. USM also has its commitment to "Transforming Higher Education for a Sustainable Tomorrow". The Right Livelihood College (RLC)'s global secretariat is hosted by the University Sains Malaysia's Centre for Policy Research and International Studies (CenPRIS). CenPRIS is a research hub, serving as the focus of USM's efforts in consultancy services, research and graduate supervision related to public policy and international studies. For more information, visit www.usm.my/cenpris

Lund, Sweden



Lund University, located in Lund, Sweden was founded in 1666. Today it is an international centre for research and education that has approximately 46,000 students. Lund is consistently ranked among the top 100 universities in the world and is the top university in Sweden in the most recent Times Higher Education ranking. In 2009, the Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies (LUCSUS) became the RLC's first European partner campus. LUCSUS is a platform for education, research and cooperation inside and outside academia on questions related to sustainable development. The education consists primarily of our international master's program, LUMES (Lund University Masters Programme in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science). The focus on research and education in Sustainability Science spans global, regional and local issues, events and relationships. For more information, visit <http://www.miclu.lu.se/index.aspx>

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



In 1950, Emperor Haile Selassie I declared the foundation of the University College of Addis Ababa. It was renamed Haile Selassie I University in 1962 and then Addis Ababa University in 1975. At the time there were only 33 students enrolled compared to the current number of more than 400,000 students. Starting from only one diploma and certificate granting department, namely Biology, the University today comprises more than 25 faculties. In 2010, Addis Ababa University became the RLC's first partner campus in Africa. For more information, visit <http://www.aau.edu.et>

Bonn, Germany



The University of Bonn is a research and education center with 200 years of tradition and about 30,000 students from more than 100 countries. The Center for Development Research (ZEF), an independent research institute at the University of Bonn, became RLC's partner campus in 2010. ZEF conducts interdisciplinary and applied research on crosscutting socio-political, economic and environmental problems in Africa, Asia and Latin America with the overall goal to contribute to sustainable development. Since 1997, ZEF runs the PhD Program "Bonn Interdisciplinary Graduate School for Development Research" which is unique in terms of its interdisciplinary set up, internationality and size (around 140 PhD students from more than 70 countries). Particular focus is given to strengthen capacity of highly qualified scientific staff, advisers, and managers from partner countries. ZEF ranks among the worldwide Top 10 of science and technology think tanks. For more information, visit <http://www.zef.de>

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www.usm.my/rlc
www.rightlivelihood.org

Work with us to make a better world through :

- ✓ Projects Of Hope
- ✓ Supporting Solutions
- ✓ Honouring Courage
- ✓ Walking The Talk
- ✓ Realising the Impossible

" Remember, little people doing little things in little places
can change the world"

Anwar Fazal, RLA 1982

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UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MOTHER EARTH

(This Declaration was adopted by the World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth, held in Cochabamba, Bolivia on April 22nd 2010.

The Bolivian government has submitted it to the United Nations for consideration.)

Preamble

We, the peoples and nations of Earth:

considering that we are all part of Mother Earth, an indivisible, living community of interrelated and interdependent beings with a common destiny;

gratefully acknowledging that Mother Earth is the source of life, nourishment and learning and provides everything we need to live well;

recognizing that the capitalist system and all forms of depredation, exploitation, abuse and contamination have caused great destruction, degradation and disruption of Mother Earth, putting life as we know it today at risk through phenomena such as climate change;

convinced that in an interdependent living community it is not possible to recognize the rights of only human beings without causing an imbalance within Mother Earth;

affirming that to guarantee human rights it is necessary to recognize and defend the rights of Mother Earth and all beings in her and that there are existing cultures, practices and laws that do so;

conscious of the urgency of taking decisive, collective action to transform structures and systems that cause climate change and other threats to Mother Earth;

proclaim this Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth, and call on the General Assembly of the United Nations to adopt it, as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations of the world, and to the end that every individual and institution takes responsibility for promoting through teaching, education, and consciousness raising, respect for the rights recognized in this Declaration and ensure through prompt and progressive measures and mechanisms, national and international, their universal and effective recognition and observance among all peoples and States in the world.

Article 1. Mother Earth

- (1) *Mother Earth is a living being.*
- (2) *Mother Earth is a unique, indivisible, self-regulating community of interrelated beings that sustains, contains and reproduces all beings.*
- (3) *Each being is defined by its relationships as an integral part of Mother Earth.*
- (4) *The inherent rights of Mother Earth are inalienable in that they arise from the same source as existence.*
- (5) *Mother Earth and all beings are entitled to all the inherent rights recognized in this Declaration without distinction of any kind, such as may be made between organic and inorganic beings, species, origin, use to human beings, or any other status.*
- (6) *Just as human beings have human rights, all other beings also have rights which are specific to their species or kind and appropriate for their role and function within the communities within which they exist.*
- (7) *The rights of each being are limited by the rights of other beings and any conflict between their rights must be resolved in a way that maintains the integrity, balance and health of Mother Earth.*

Article 2. Inherent Rights of Mother Earth

- (1) *Mother Earth and all beings of which she is composed have the following inherent rights:*
 - (a) *the right to life and to exist;*
 - (b) *the right to be respected;*
 - (c) *the right to regenerate its bio-capacity and to continue its vital cycles and processes free from human disruptions;*

- (d) *the right to maintain its identity and integrity as a distinct, self-regulating and interrelated being*
 - (e) *the right to water as a source of life;*
 - (f) *the right to clean air;*
 - (g) *the right to integral health;*
 - (h) *the right to be free from contamination, pollution and toxic or radioactive waste;*
 - (i) *the right to not have its genetic structure modified or disrupted in a manner that threatens its integrity or vital and healthy functioning;*
 - (j) *the right to full and prompt restoration of the violation of the rights recognized in this Declaration caused by human activities;*
- (2) *Each being has the right to a place and to play its role in Mother Earth for her harmonious functioning.*
 - (3) *Every being has the right to wellbeing and to live free from torture or cruel treatment by human beings.*

Article 3. Obligations of human beings to Mother Earth

- (1) *Every human being is responsible for respecting and living in harmony with Mother Earth.*
- (2) *Human beings, all States, and all public and private institutions must:*
 - (a) *act in accordance with the rights and obligations recognized in this Declaration;*
 - (b) *recognize and promote the full implementation and enforcement of the rights and obligations recognized in this Declaration;*
 - (c) *promote and participate in learning, analysis, interpretation and communication about how to live in harmony with Mother Earth in accordance with this Declaration;*

- (d) *ensure that the pursuit of human wellbeing contributes to the wellbeing of Mother Earth, now and in the future;*
- (e) *establish and apply effective norms and laws for the defence, protection and conservation of the rights of Mother Earth;*
- (f) *respect, protect, conserve and where necessary, restore the integrity, of the vital ecological cycles, processes and balances of Mother Earth;*
- (g) *guarantee that the damages caused by human violations of the inherent rights recognized in this Declaration are rectified and that those responsible are held accountable for restoring the integrity and health of Mother Earth;*
- (h) *empower human beings and institutions to defend the rights of Mother Earth and of all beings;*
- (i) *establish precautionary and restrictive measures to prevent human activities from causing species extinction, the destruction of ecosystems or the disruption of ecological cycles;*
- (j) *guarantee peace and eliminate nuclear, chemical and biological weapons;*
- (k) *promote and support practices of respect for Mother Earth and all beings, in accordance with their own cultures, traditions and customs;*
- (l) *promote economic systems that are in harmony with Mother Earth and in accordance with the rights recognized in this Declaration.*

Article 4. Definitions

- (1) *The term "being" includes ecosystems, natural communities, species and all other natural entities which exist as part of Mother Earth.*
- (2) *Nothing in this Declaration restricts the recognition of other inherent rights of all beings or specified beings.*