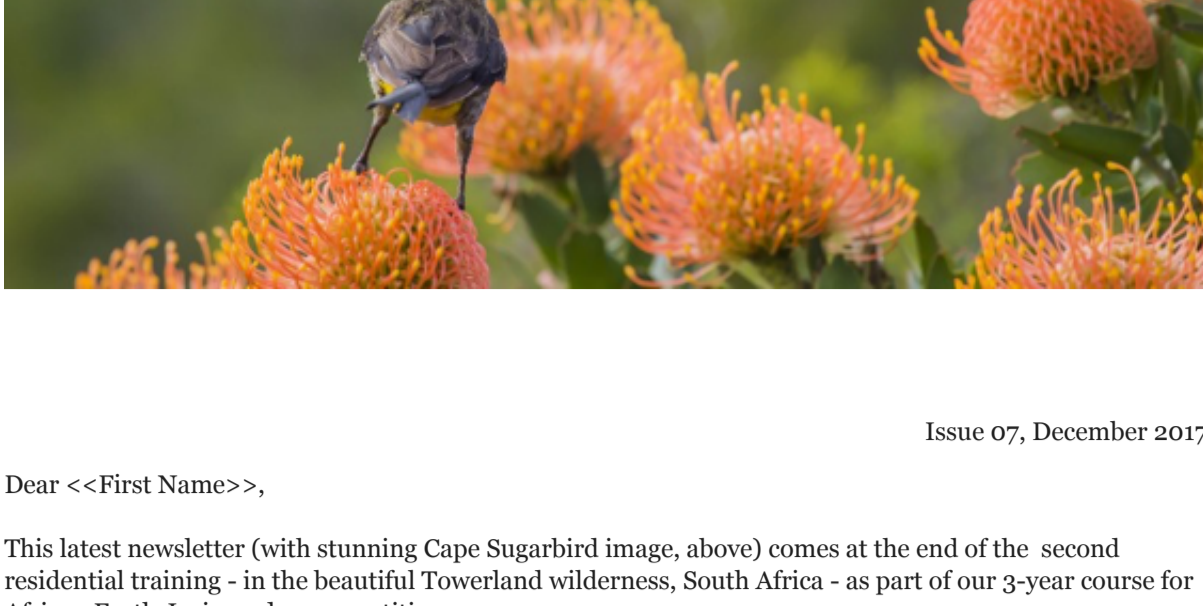


Earth Jurisprudence

Reconnecting with the laws and lore of the Earth

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Nurturing an African Earth Jurisprudence Movement



Issue 07, December 2017

Dear <<First Name>>,

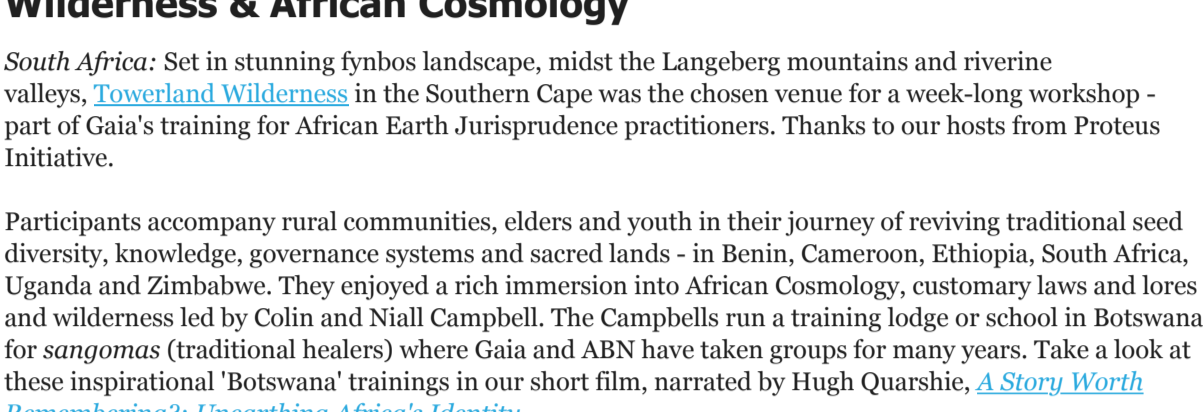
This latest newsletter (with stunning Cape Sugarbird image, above) comes at the end of the second residential training - in the beautiful Towerland wilderness, South Africa - as part of our 3-year course for African Earth Jurisprudence practitioners.

A warm thank you also to the Working Group for Indigenous Populations / Communities (WGIP) of the African Commission for the joint side-event in Banjul earlier this month (see below for more info); and a congratulations to the Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature (GARN) members who staged a successful International Tribunal on the Rights of Nature at the recent UN climate negotiations in Bonn.

Scroll down for these and more snippets of Earth Jurisprudence news from Africa and globally. And do remember to [drop us an email](#) with your stories and materials for sharing through this network.

Warmly,

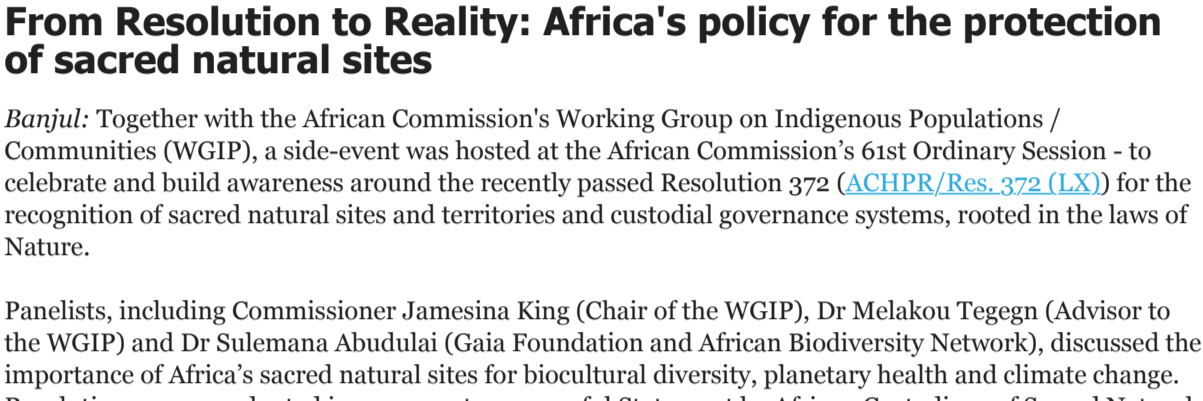
Liz, Fiona & Mersha



Wilderness & African Cosmology

South Africa: Set in stunning fynbos landscape, midst the Langeberg mountains and riverine valleys, [Towerland Wilderness](#) in the Southern Cape was the chosen venue for a week-long workshop - part of Gaia's training for African Earth Jurisprudence practitioners. Thanks to our hosts from Proteus Initiative.

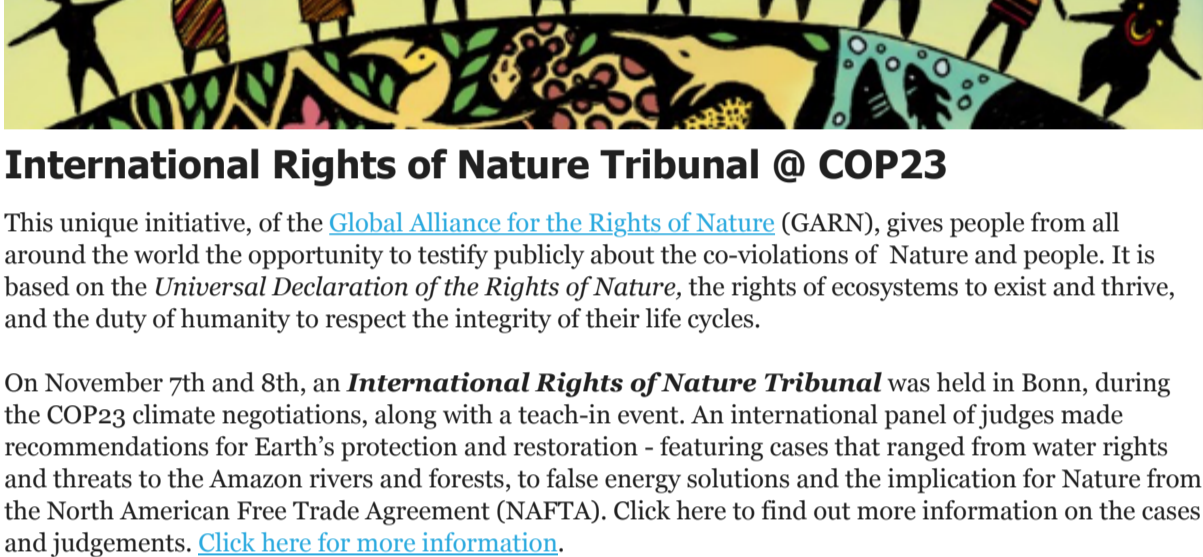
Participants accompany rural communities, elders and youth in their journey of reviving traditional seed diversity, knowledge, governance systems and sacred lands - in Benin, Cameroon, Ethiopia, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe. They enjoyed a rich immersion into African Cosmology, customary laws and lores and wilderness led by Colin and Niall Campbell. The Campbells run a training lodge or school in Botswana for *sangomas* (traditional healers) where Gaia and ABN have taken groups for many years. Take a look at these inspirational 'Botswana' trainings in our short film, narrated by Hugh Quarshie, [A Story Worth Remembering?: Unearthing Africa's Identity](#).



From Resolution to Reality: Africa's policy for the protection of sacred natural sites

Banjul: Together with the African Commission's Working Group on Indigenous Populations / Communities (WGIP), a side-event was hosted at the African Commission's 61st Ordinary Session - to celebrate and build awareness around the recently passed Resolution 372 ([ACHPR/Res. 372 \(LXI\)](#)) for the recognition of sacred natural sites and territories and custodial governance systems, rooted in the laws of Nature.

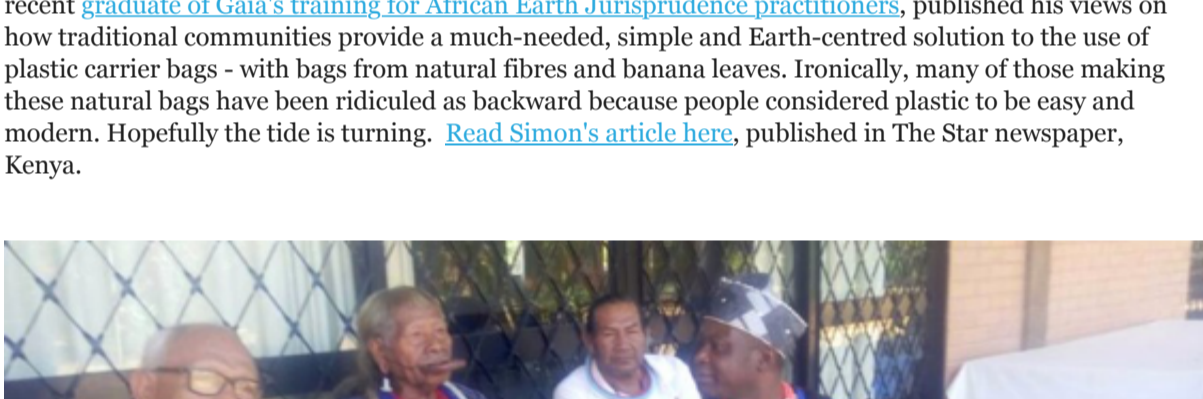
Panelists, including Commissioner Jamesina King (Chair of the WGIP), Dr Melakou Tegegn (Advisor to the WGIP) and Dr Sulemana Abudulai (Gaia Foundation and African Biodiversity Network), discussed the importance of Africa's sacred natural sites for biocultural diversity, planetary health and climate change. Resolution 372 was adopted in response to a powerful Statement by African Custodians of Sacred Natural Sites, and the joint Gaia/African Biodiversity Network report [A Call for Legal Recognition of Sacred Natural Sites and Territories and their Customary Governance Systems](#). The work ahead is to develop strategies for Africa-wide monitoring and implementation.



International Rights of Nature Tribunal @ COP23

This unique initiative, of the [Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature](#) (GARN), gives people from all around the world the opportunity to testify publicly about the co-violations of Nature and people. It is based on the *Universal Declaration of the Rights of Nature*, the rights of ecosystems to exist and thrive, and the duty of humanity to respect the integrity of their life cycles.

On November 7th and 8th, an **International Rights of Nature Tribunal** was held in Bonn, during the COP23 climate negotiations, along with a teach-in event. An international panel of judges made recommendations for Earth's protection and restoration - featuring cases that ranged from water rights and threats to the Amazon rivers and forests, to false energy solutions and the implication for Nature from the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Click here to find out more information on the cases and judgements. [Click here for more information](#).



For Mother Nature's sake, stop using plastics

Kenya: Some African governments, including Rwanda and most recently Benin, are starting to call a halt on the manufacture, use, importation and sale of non-recyclable plastic bags.

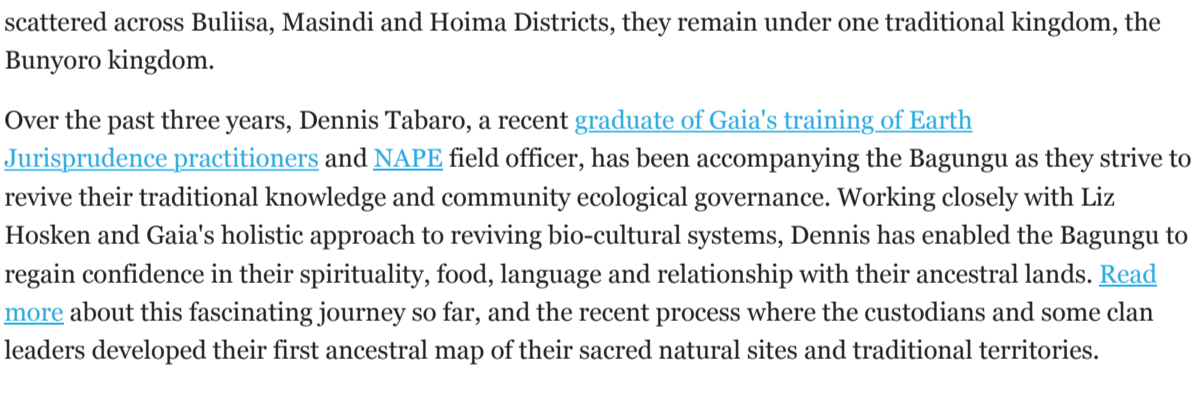
Kenya's new legislation, in August this year, has been described as the world's toughest, with a penalty of four years in jail or Sh4 million fine. Simon Mitambo, Coordinator of the [African Biodiversity Network](#) and recent [graduate of Gaia's training for African Earth Jurisprudence practitioners](#), published his views on how traditional communities provide a much-needed, simple and Earth-centred solution to the use of plastic carrier bags - with bags from natural fibres and banana leaves. Ironically, many of those making these natural bags have been ridiculed as backward because they published in plastic to be easy and modern. Hopefully the tide is turning. [Read Simon's article here](#), published in The Star newspaper, Kenya.



From Benin to Brazil: linking with the Alliance of Mother Nature's Guardians

Brazil: Apollinaire Oussou Lio, Director of GRABE-Benin and recent [graduate from Gaia's training for African Earth Jurisprudence practitioners](#), was invited to join an emotive international gathering led by Brazilian indigenous leader Chief Raoni Metuktire.

This meeting of the Alliance of Mother Nature's Guardians drew indigenous leaders from across the world - including some of our Brazilian indigenous allies, Yanomami leader Davi Kopenawa and Ashininka leader Benki Piyako - for a joint call to states and the international community to protect Mother Earth and life for future generations. [Click here to read more about the AMNG Assembly in Brazil](#).



Bagungu Custodians map their Sacred Lands

Uganda: The Bagungu territory includes Lake Mwitanzige (traditional name), known today as Lake Albert, and the adjacent land nowadays known as the Buliisa district in western Uganda, with DRC Congo across the lake. The white Nile flows from the lake northwards. With some 80 clans and subclans, scattered across Buliisa, Masindi and Hoima Districts, they remain under one traditional kingdom, the Bunyoro kingdom.

Over the past three years, Dennis Tabaro, a recent [graduate of Gaia's training of Earth Jurisprudence practitioners](#) and [NAPÉ](#) field officer, has been accompanying the Bagungu as they strive to revive their traditional knowledge and community ecological governance. Working closely with Liz Hosken and Gaia's holistic approach to reviving bio-cultural systems, Dennis has enabled the Bagungu to regain confidence in their spirituality, food, language and relationship with their ancestral lands. [Read more](#) about this fascinating journey so far, and the recent process where the custodians and some clan leaders developed their first ancestral map of their sacred natural sites and traditional territories.

Recent & Upcoming events

27 October 2017, New Orleans, USA

US Rights of Nature Symposium: Driving Rights of Nature into Law – Opportunities, Risks, and Obstacles. Co-sponsored by the [Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund \(CELDF\)](#) and [Tulane Law School](#), the Symposium brought together panelists and speakers from around the world. [Click here for a video of the Symposium](#).

28-29 October 2017, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Cross-Cultural Dialogue Circle, **Voices of the Earth**, at the [Museum of Indian Arts and Culture](#), hosted by [1 Earth Institute](#).

9 November, 2017, Oakland, USA

25th Anniversary of The Universe Story. A Flaring Forth Celebration with Brian Thomas Swimme. [Click here for more information](#).

11 November, 2017, London, UK

Spiritual Ecology in Action! A special one day confluence at St. Ethelburga's Center for Reconciliation and Peace, featuring a special UK premiere of 'Sanctuaries of Silence', by filmmaker Emmanuel Vaughan-Lee. [Click here for more detail](#).

11-12 December 2017, Geneva, Switzerland

6th International Annual Conference on the Rights of Nature, Peace and Sustainable Development, at the [OSI Geneva Forum at the United Nations](#) - billed as 'the halfway point between the Porto Alegre and the Davos Forums; the platform for the creation and development of projects for peace and SDGs. [Click here for more detail](#).

6-10 February 2018 - Monte da Mariposa, Portugal

A Delicate Activism! facilitated by Allan Kaplan and Sue Davidoff of [The Proteus Initiative](#), South Africa - an introduction to radically different, more organic approaches to social and ecological process and practice. [Click here to read more about Delicate Activism](#).

20-22 June 2018 - Oslo and Akershus University College, Oslo, Norway. **Towards Convivial Conservation? Radical Strategies for Saving Nature in the 'Anthropocene'**

A curious thing about *H. sapiens* is that we are clever enough to document — in exquisite detail — various trends that portend the collapse of modern civilization, yet not nearly smart enough to extricate ourselves from our self-induced predicament.

Extract from "[What, Me Worry? Humans Are Blind to Imminent Environmental Collapse](#)", by William E. Rees, 16 Nov 2017, TheTyeec.ca

READ, LISTEN, ENJOY!

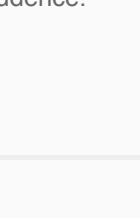
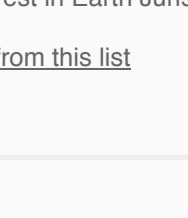
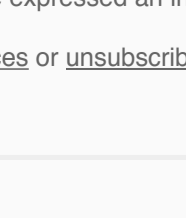
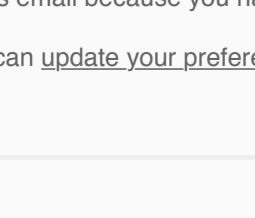
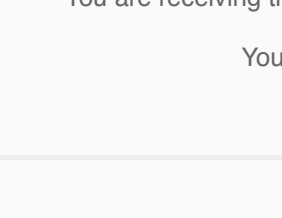
Read

- [Rights of Planet Earth](#) by Natraj Publishers (Delhi) – Valerie Cabanes.
- [Is there a way out](#), editorial piece by Pallav Das and Ashish Kothari.
- [For Native Americans, a river is more than a 'person,' it is also a sacred place](#) by Rosalyn R. LaPier, The Conversation, October 8, 2017.
- [Repairing the Broken Arrow: rebuilding cultural identity through art and language](#), text and illustration by Barbara Derrick, a Tsilhqot' in First Nation artist and writer, published in TerraLingua's Langscape magazine.
- [15,000 scientists give catastrophic warning about the fate of the world in new 'letter to humanity'](#), The Independent, 13 November 2017
- [Indigenous groups win greater climate recognition at Bonn Summit](#), The Guardian, 15 November 2017.

Listen

- [The Rights of Nature: a legal revolution that could save the world](#), is David Boyd's more recent book. [In conversation with Living on Earth](#), he explains how this approach can go a long way to protecting critical ecosystems from human exploitation and destruction.

Earth Jurisprudence is the philosophy and practice that recognises the Earth as lawful and ordered. We humans are embedded in her living processes, and our actions should be guided by the primary laws of the Earth.



Working together, to strengthen the African Earth Jurisprudence movement.

Our mailing address is:

The Gaia Foundation, 6 Heathgate Place, London NW3 2NU

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