



Earth Jurisprudence Update

Earth-centred News and Inspiration

Greetings Friends,

Earth Jurisprudence envisions the restoration of intimacy between people and place. This month's Update shares inspiring experiences and initiatives from some of those walking this path, whether through apprenticing with a river, nurturing seed, engaging in intergenerational dialogue and eco-cultural mapping or reimagining dominant economic and legal paradigms.

In the words of Simone Weil, "Rootedness in a place is the most important and least recognized need of the human soul". May your roots branch and deepen over the coming months.

With warm, wild wishes,

Carlotta, on behalf of the Gaia Team

People and Place

Ego to Eco: Restoring Peoples and Places to Each Other

This January, Samuel Nnah from the African Earth Jurisprudence Collective joined Action for Conservation's Hal Rhoades, writer Sharon Blackie and activist Satish Kumar at the Oxford Real Farming Conference to discuss the role that restoring community life, collective place-making and intergenerational decision-making can play in restoring the diversity and abundance of our fields, forests and wetlands. Eco-cultural mapping methodologies have proved central to this endeavour and Samuel and Hal shared their experiences of applying these methodologies in very different contexts, from Africa to Wales.



Indigenous Tharakan People from central Kenya co-create a calendar depicting the four traditional seasons in the Tharakan year and revealing the changes in weather, constellations, ecosystems and human rhythms that take place in each. Credit: Hal Rhoades for The Gaia Foundation.

What the River Teaches Me: Thoughts from Barry Lopez

In this Orion Magazine excerpt from *Syntax of the River: The Pattern Which Connects*, Barry Lopez reflects on his 40-year relationship with the river nearby his home. “I think for any writer, the place itself is not all that important. It’s your intimacy with the place that’s really important... I think when you’re young you want to learn the names of everything... But it’s the syntax that you really are after. Anybody can develop the vocabulary. It’s the relationships that are important. And it’s the discerning of this three-dimensional set of relationships that awakens you to how complex this is at any one moment.”

Seed Sovereignty

Seeding Tomorrow

A new film from The Gaia Foundation captures the re-emergence of an ancient occupation. It follows the market gardeners in Ireland who are returning to seed production; amongst the chaos of Brexit and climate change, their story offers security and hope for the future. “Seeds and people: we have shaped each other. Throughout human history we have chosen the most resilient, most productive, most nutritious seeds. Those seeds have nourished us the following year, and the year after that. Sowing,

selecting, saving and sharing seed was an intrinsic part of nurturing plants and people.”



Credit: Andy Pilsbury for The Gaia Foundation

Reclaiming Culture Through Seeds

A Growing Culture interviews Debal Deb about his battle against the erasure of local knowledge. “Seed represents culture. All seeds, not just rice. It’s Indigenous communities that carefully selected, bred, and adapted all the varieties of rice we consume today. To me, as an ecologist and scientist, seed is the result of centuries of experience by ancient farmers who created these varieties to suit different climates, cultures, and contexts. To the farmers and Indigenous communities, it is an embodiment of food culture.”

Ecological Economics

Reimagining Economics for a Thriving World

50 years on from the publication of *Small is Beautiful*, the Schumacher Center for New Economics is hosting a series of conversations celebrating E.F. Schumacher and envisioning regenerative economics for the next 50 years. In this first dialogue, Ruth Potts joins John Fullerton (Capital Institute) and Stewart Wallis (the Wellbeing Economy Alliance). “Schumacher is not somebody whose thinking is bounded by what already exists. He asks more— what should we be aiming for? It’s a book of bold, imaginative speculation, and we need much more of that kind of thing to meet the challenges of the times we’re living through today,” comments Ruth Potts, Director of Regenerative Economics at Schumacher College.

Ecocentric Legal Developments

Momentum Gathering for the Recognition of Ecocide at EU Level

Four out of the five EU parliamentary committees tasked with providing opinions on the *Directive on protection of the environment through criminal law* have voiced their support for the inclusion of a crime of ecocide in the revised legislation. This news follows the recent adoption of a resolution calling for recognition of ecocide adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). “While, unlike the EU Parliament, PACE is not a legislative body, this resolution gives huge impetus to the global initiative to recognize ecocide at the ICC... It is to be expected that this result will have a galvanising effect on continuing discussions in the EU on the revision of the Directive on protection of the environment through criminal law,” reports Stop Ecocide Foundation.

UK: Council Passes First Ever Rights of River Motion in England

Lewes District Council has passed a motion proposing a Rights of Rivers Charter for the River Ouse. “The motion, brought to the council by Green Party members, was supported by various organisations including the Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust, Sussex Wildlife Trust and the Environmental Law Foundation. Rights of Rivers was introduced as a concept at the Love Our Ouse River Festival in September last year, where people from across the Lewes district first proposed a draft charter for the river.”

Rights of Nature Special Report

This January, 360info published a Special Report on the Rights of Nature comprising articles from a number of academics offering contrasting views on the growing legal movement. Erin O'Donnell and Alessandro Pelizzon argue that the *Time is now for the next rights of nature phase*, Govind Singh asks *Could we sue Mother Earth for storm damage?*, Alex Putzer contemplates *What is the 'nature' in the rights of nature?* and Peter Burdon affirms *Giving rights to nature will not stop environmental damage*.