

## RIGHTS OF NATURE TIMELINE

**1976 - 2003**

Prof. Christopher Stone argued for legal rights for natural objects, such as trees; Thomas Berry published a book on Origin and Differentiation of Rights; and Atty Cullinan published "Wild Law: A Manifesto for Earth Justice."

**2006**

Tamaqua Borough, Pennsylvania, became the very first place in the world to recognize the Rights of Nature in law by banning the dumping of toxic sewage sludge.

**2008**

Bolivia's Legislative Assembly passed the Law of the Rights of Mother Earth.

**2014**

New Zealand parliament passed legislation recognizing Te Urewera national park - as having "legal recognition in its own right."

**2016**

The Ho-Chunk Nation took its first vote for a Rights of Nature Tribal Constitutional amendment, making it the first tribal nation in the U.S. to do so.

Columbia's Constitutional court ruled that the Altrato River possesses rights to "protection, conservation, maintenance, and restoration" and established joint guardianship shared by Indigenous People and the national government.

**2017**

Lafayette, Colorado, in the U.S. enacted the first Climate Bill of Rights, recognizing the rights of humans and nature to a healthy climate and banning fossil fuel extraction as a violation of those rights.

**2018**

The Ponka Nation of Oklahoma adopted a customary law recognizing the Rights of Nature.

The High Court of Uttarakhand recognized the rights of the "entire animal kingdom".

## RON IN THE PHILIPPINES

**2018**

RoN was launched by PMPI in collaboration with NASSA/Caritas Philippines to address the growing concerns over ecosystem destruction caused by mining activities and the experiences of impacts of climate change.

**2019**

A Rights of Nature Bill, which aims to protect the country's ecosystems by granting legal personhood to nature was filed by lawmakers in the 18th Congress. Senator Risa Hontiveros introduced it in the Senate, while Congressman Kit Belmonte introduced it in the House of Representatives.

**2022**

Senator Risa Hontiveros, along with three other Congressmen Edgar Chatto, Joey Salceda, and Arnan Panaligan - filed the Rights of Nature Bill, an act that recognizes the rights of natural ecosystems, populations, process and provides mechanisms for their protection and enforcement. (July 7, 2022)

In Infanta Quezon, Vice Mayor Lord Arnel Ruanto filed the 1st Rights of Nature ordinance in the country, which designates the Agos River as a Protected Area in the Municipality of Infanta, Quezon, recognizing its rights and allocating funds accordingly. (Nov. 29, 2022)

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**RIGHTS**  
— OF —  
**NaturePH**

“Recognizing that ecosystems and natural communities are not merely property that can be owned but rather, entities that possess an independent and inalienable right to exist and flourish.”





## CAMPAIGN DIRECTIONS

RoN PH is actively engaging with various social structures to facilitate transformative change in the way humans govern and live their lives within the context of the Earth community.

### ECONOMIC

- Explores a Holistic Development Paradigm aimed at facilitating the transition from an extractive to a circular and localized economy.
- Engages agencies responsible for planning, developing, and directing the Philippine economy, such as the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Regional Development Council (RDC), and technical professionals.

### LEGAL

- Develops a new legal framework that shifts the perspective from viewing nature as a property and an object to recognizing nature as a rights-bearing entity.
- Advocates for the enactment of national laws and local ordinances that acknowledge the rights of nature.

### POLITICAL

- Promotes an eco-centric approach to governance that balances the care for the well-being of both humans and nature.
- Collaborates with local executives to develop programs and policies that ensure the protection and promotion of the well-being of both humans and non-human beings.

### CULTURAL

- Fosters the development and nurturing of a culture that values interconnectedness with nature, mutuality, and symbiosis between humans and nature.
- Advocates for the adoption of sustainable or “sapat” lifestyles in families, schools, and communities.

## WHAT IS RIGHTS OF NATURE

The concept of the Rights of Nature recognizes and honors that all beings on Earth have rights just as humans do. At the heart of the campaign is addressing our dysfunctional nature-human relationship, embedded in the economic system and the legal, social, political, and modern cultural frameworks that harm both people and the planet. Recognizing the Rights of Nature means that human activities and development should proceed without causing significant interference with ecosystems' ability to thrive, evolve, regenerate their natural capacities, and absorb the impacts of these activities. It also requires that individuals, governments, and corporate entities should be held fully accountable for the adverse effects of their actions on Earth systems.

The Rights of Nature calls for a paradigm shift, moving away from anthropocentric, utilitarian, and hierarchical perspectives or relationships with nature toward an interconnected relationship between humans and nature.

It embraces a kinship view of the human-nature relationship, advancing beyond the traditional stewardship perspective of human beings' role in nature. The Book of Genesis and traditional Philippine stories about the origins of men and women strongly emphasize that we originated from nature - land, dust, water, fire, and so on.

## ENVIRONMENTAL STRUGGLE

The struggle to protect the environment, undertaken by all sectors of Philippine society, particularly indigenous people, farmers, and fisherfolk communities, has been long and arduous in the Philippines.

The right to a balanced and healthy environment, recognized as a fundamental human right, has been enshrined in the 1986 Philippine constitution. However, environmental protection and sustainability appear to be the least priority on the government's agenda, which instead favors policies promoting coal, gas, nuclear energy, and mineral mining.

In the 2018 Global Witness Report, the Philippines was ranked as the most risky and deadliest country in the world for environmental advocates. The report documented 30 murders in the Philippines.

