

Earth Trusteeship Forum
10 December 2018
Peace Palace, The Hague

1. Purpose

This year's Human Rights Day marks the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) which was adopted and proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948. For 10 December 2018, a number of high-level events are being organized including a UN High Commissioner for Human Rights conference in Paris, a ceremony for the United Nations Human Rights Prize in New York and the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony in Stockholm.

While these and other events are focussed on celebrating the achievements of human rights, the Earth Trusteeship Forum will emphasize the linkages between human rights and responsibilities with respect to humanity's predicament, i.e. living sustainably on a finite planet. The safe and just operating space for humanity is marked by social foundations (human rights) and ecological limits (planetary boundaries). As humanity has now breached some of these ecological limits, continued living in dignity and prosperity requires a profound sense of responsibility and trusteeship for Earth.

2. Adoption of the Hague Proposal of Principles for a Universal Declaration on Human Responsibilities and Earth Trusteeship

The Earth Trusteeship Forum has the three-fold objective of

- celebrating human rights in the context of human responsibilities;
- recognising the Earth and nature's intrinsic rights to exist and flourish;
- initiating Earth trusteeship.

To this end, the Forum will bring together a wide spectrum of civil society organizations concerned with human rights and responsibilities, social and environmental justice, democracy and peace, and nature and Earth. The commonality of all these organizations and associated individuals lies in their concern for making real humanity's responsibility for Earth, our home. The Forum will adopt the "Hague Principles" calling upon the

United Nations to initiate work towards a “Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities and Earth Trusteeship” based on these principles.

3. Launch of the Earth Trusteeship Initiative

The Forum will further launch an initiative to promote Earth trusteeship at all levels of human conduct, i.e. at the personal level, at the level of groups and communities and at the levels of local, national and global governance.

The initiative has three core objectives: to promote, engage and propose. The first objective is to **promote** Earth Trusteeship as an ethical commitment and a new form of governance, i.e. speaking and acting on behalf of global citizens as Earth trustees and for those who cannot speak for themselves (future human generations, non-human beings, Earth). The second objective is to **engage** with the current process of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This process involves a review of its progress in 2020, i.e. ten years before 2030 when the SDGs are expected to be achieved. Indications are that only firm, institutionalised trusteeship responsibilities can ensure that human society will become more sustainable. The third objective, therefore, is to **propose** an Earth Trusteeship Council to the United Nations in September 2020. Associated with the campaign are several conferences to be held during 2019 and 2020 and organized by major international networks such as WWF, IUCN, Earth Charter International and others.

4. Organization, logistics and format

Following the successful Earth Trusteeship Gathering in The Hague, 22-24 June 2018, the Forum will be organized through the Earth Trusteeship Platform (based in The Hague). An organizing group comprising of several individuals associated with the Platform is responsible for

- Inviting major global networks to join the Platform as co-organizers and sponsors of the Earth Trusteeship Forum; among these should be WWF, Oxfam, Earth Charter International, Rights of Mother Earth, Earth Law Alliance, IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law, Ecological Law and Governance Association, Common Home of Humanity, Global Ecological Integrity Group, UN Harmony with Nature and others;
- Creating a website presence (for advertising and endorsements);

- Inviting - together with these co-organizers - other networks (including those associated with previous declarations of human responsibilities) to endorse the Hague Principles and attend the Earth Trusteeship Forum (at own cost);
- Drafting format and programme for the Forum which should include some invited speakers;
- Organizing the event itself (hire of venue in the Peace Palace, catering etc.).