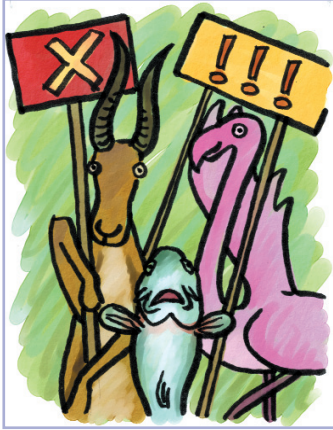




Declaration of the Rights of Living Beings



The Declaration of the Rights of Living Beings is intended to foster an ethical attitude towards all living things and to legally regulate relations between human beings and all biological species.

As a legal norm, the declaration obliges human beings to treat other life forms as equals. All living beings require certain conditions and resources, without which they cannot fully and independently exist. Human beings need to provide all living things with opportunities to survive in their natural environment.

The human recognition of the rights of living creatures provides a moral and legal framework for ensuring the protection of species.

The declaration affirms that:

I. All species, subspecies, populations and other forms of living beings that have appeared and proliferated through natural evolution and migration processes have the following rights:

- the right to exist;
- the right to natural freedom in their natural habitat;
- the right to a share of the Earth's resources necessary for their existence;
- the right to legal protection; and
- the right not to be held responsible to human beings.

II. All individual living beings have the following rights:

- the right to life;
- the right to natural freedom and wellbeing in their natural habitat;
- the right to their required share of the Earth's resources; and
- the right to protection from suffering caused by human beings.

III. Living beings are also accorded the following rights:

a) At the level of species, subspecies and populations:

- the right to reparation from damage caused to them; and
- the right to proper care (e.g. species listed in the Red Data Book).

b) At the level of individual organisms:

- the right to legal protection;
- the right to dignity; and
- the right to proper care (e.g. domestic and farm animals, plants and domesticated wild animals).

The declaration was elaborated by the Kiev Ecological and Cultural Center and the environmental organisation Novaya volna at the international workshop "Natural Rights of Nature", held in Kiev on May 16–18, 2003.