

Introduction and overview of the United Nations Harmony with Nature Program

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Abstract.

In 2009, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 22 April as International Mother Earth Day. In so doing, Member States acknowledged that the Earth and its ecosystems are our common home, and expressed their conviction that it is necessary to promote Harmony with Nature in order to achieve a just balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations. The same year, the General Assembly adopted its first resolution on 'Harmony with Nature'.

The purpose of this talk is to provide an historic overview of the development of the Harmony with Nature program, starting with the declaration of International Mother Earth Day on 22 April 2009 by the General Assembly. This historic background will form the backdrop for discussion on the relevance of the program for Australian environmental, and Earth law initiatives, and its important role as a platform to connect programs, independent scholars, and initiatives around the world.

The session is proposed as a short presentation followed by Q&A, or short presentation followed by panel discussion.

BIOGRAPHY

Laura is an Australian environmental, and climate change lawyer (Baker & McKenzie 2011-2014), with a background in Australian energy policy (Director, World Energy Council Australia 2008-2013).

Laura was appointed as the Facilitator for Australia/ Oceania to oversee the United Nations Harmony with Nature Program in 2016. Laura has lectured at Yale University, and New York University, and is currently a visiting research fellow at the American University of Sovereign Nations in Arizona.

Laura holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Law with Honours from Monash University, a Post Graduate Diploma in Law, and a Masters Degree in Bioethics and Public Policy. Her research interests are in environmental philosophy, Earth jurisprudence, and agency in the anthropocene.