



Media Release: First Rights of Nature bill introduced in Australia

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Rights of Nature and Future Generations Bill Introduced in Western Australian Parliament

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Diane Evers, a Member of the Western Australian Parliament, has introduced a Bill to recognise the Rights of Nature and Future Generations. This is the first time that legislation aiming to recognise the rights of nature has been introduced in an Australian Parliament.

The Australian Earth Laws Alliance (AELA) is working with communities and organizations in Australia, to advance the Rights of Nature. AELA assisted with legal and drafting advice for the legislation and congratulates MP Evers for introducing the Bill.

The “Rights of Nature and Future Generations Bill 2019” would secure the Rights of Nature to “exist, flourish, regenerate, and evolve,” and provide the people and government of Western Australia with the ability to defend and enforce these rights on behalf of Nature. The Bill recognises the rights of First Nations Peoples to speak for and defend their ancestral lands, and the Rights of Nature. The Bill also recognises the rights of present and future generations to a healthy environment, and includes a clause relating to the “precautionary principle” by stating that “lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for denying or postponing the implementation, defence, or enforcement” of the Rights of Nature.

MP Evers explained that, “This is a necessary step in protecting the future of our planet and future generations as the current system is not working. We continue to see environmental destruction and actions that ensure continuing climate impacts.”

Dr Michelle Maloney, of the Australian Earth Laws Alliance, stated, “Around the world, we are seeing an increasing number of Indigenous peoples, communities, and countries introducing Rights of Nature laws. These laws improve upon the current legal system, where nature is merely human property that can be used up until there’s nothing left. Rights of Nature laws redefine what environmental protection means: putting the health of the living world at the centre of society, so that present and future generations of people and all other living beings can have a liveable, healthy and biodiverse planet to live on.”

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