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Rights of Nature alliance holds Ecuador summit

by Colleen Dunne

Eco Catholic

Beginning Monday, key leaders of the emergent "rights of nature" movement are holding an international summit in Quito, Ecuador. Adrian Dominican Sr. Elise Garcia will provide updates to *NCR's* Eco Catholic blog while attending the summit, which aims "to devise a unified global strategy for advancing the Rights of Nature movement around the world," according to a press release.

The summit of the Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature began in 2010 as a vehicle to recognize that humans are one part of an interdependent community of life on earth, and have a responsibility to recognize the right of nature to exist, persist, evolve and regenerate. The rights of nature movement aims to shift consciousness away from a legal system that views nature as property for human use and consumption.

"A 40-year regime of environmental laws in the United States and other industrial nations has failed to protect against the escalating ravages evident around the world, including decimated species, depleted forest reserves, water shortages, and record-breaking hurricanes," said Robin R. Milam, administrative director of the global alliance, in a Jan. 9 press statement highlighting the summit.

Garcia will provide updates as members of the summit analyze the experiences of communities in Ecuador, Bolivia and the United States that have already implanted rights of nature laws, and devise a unified global strategy for advancing the rights of nature movement around the world.

The summit concludes Friday with a public simulated tribunal modeling how to adjudicate the rights of nature in courts of law. Key rights of nature cases will be heard, including the Chevron/Texaco case in Ecuador, the oil exploitation of Yasuni-ITT in Ecuador's rainforest and the destruction of Australia's Great Barrier Reef.

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