



## **Wolastoqew Lakutuwakon ciw 'Kihtahkomikum Nikuwoss**

## **Wolastoqew Declaration of the Rights of Our Mother Earth**

We, Wolastoqewiyik:

- Considering that human beings are a part of Mother Earth, an inseparable, living community of interconnected and interdependent beings with a common destiny;
- Positively recognizing that Mother Earth is the source of all life, nourishment and learning, and supplies everything we need to live well;
- Acknowledging that the capitalist system and all forms of devastation, exploitation, abuse and corruption have caused great ruin, damage and destruction of Mother Earth, putting life as we know it today in jeopardy through events such as climate change;
- Certain that in an interdependent living community it is not possible to recognize the rights of only human beings without causing an imbalance within Mother Earth;
- Acknowledging that to assure human rights it is necessary to recognize and defend the rights of Mother Earth and all beings in Her and that there are existing cultures, practices and laws that do so;
- Mindful of the urgency of taking vital, cooperative action to transform structures and systems that cause climate change and other threats to Mother Earth;
- Proclaim this Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth, and call on all Wolastoqewiyik to adopt it, as a common standard of achievement for all

Wolastoqewiyik, and to the end that every individual and institution takes responsibility for promoting through teaching, education, and awareness, respect for the rights recognized in this Declaration and guarantee through punctual and evolutionary actions and methods, in our non-ceded Wolastoq Homeland and all of Turtle Island.

### **Article 1. Mother Earth**

- (1) Mother Earth is a living being.
- (2) Mother Earth is an irreplaceable, inseparable, self-determining community of interconnected beings that sustains, contains and reproduces all beings.
- (3) Each being is defined by its relationships as an essential part of Mother Earth.
- (4) The inherent rights of Mother Earth are absolute in that they arise from the same source as existence.
- (5) Mother Earth and all life are at liberty to all the inherent rights documented in this Declaration without distinction of any kind, such as may be made between organic and inorganic beings, species, origin, use to human beings, or any other status.
- (6) Just as human beings have human rights, all other beings also have rights that are specific to their species or kind and suitable for their role and function within the communities within which they exist.
- (7) The rights of each being are restricted by the rights of other beings and any disagreement between their rights must be resolved in a way that upholds the integrity, balance and health of Mother Earth.

### **Article 2. Inherent Rights of Mother Earth**

- (1) Mother Earth and all beings of which she is composed have the following inherent rights:
  - (a) The right to life and to exist;
  - (b) The right to be respected;
  - (c) The right to regenerate its bio-capacity and to continue its vital cycles and processes free from human disruptions;
  - (d) The right to preserve its identity and integrity as a distinct, self-regulating and interconnected being;
  - (e) The right to water as a source of life;
  - (f) The right to clean air;

- (g) The right to basic health;
- (h) The right to be free from contamination, pollution and toxic or radioactive waste;
- (i) The right to not have its genetic structure customized or disturbed in a manner that threatens its reliability or essential and healthy functioning;
- (j) The right to full and timely restoration of the violation of the rights documented in this Declaration caused by human activities;

(2) Each being has the right to a place and to play its role in Mother Earth for Her balanced purpose.

(3) Every being has the right to security and to live free from torture or cruel treatment by human beings.

### **Article 3. Obligations of human beings to Mother Earth**

(1) Every human being is accountable for respecting and living in unity with Mother Earth.

(2) Human beings, all States, and all civic and private institutions must:

- (a) Act in agreement with the rights and responsibilities recognized in this Declaration;
- (b) Accept and endorse the full implementation and enforcement of the rights and requirements recognized in this Declaration;
- (c) Endorse and partake in learning, studying, understanding and interaction about how to live in agreement with Mother Earth in harmony with this Declaration;
- (d) Guarantee that the quest of human security be part of the safety of Mother Earth, now and in the future;
- (e) Create and apply functioning norms and laws for the protection, and conservation of the rights of Mother Earth;
- (f) Respect, protect, preserve and where necessary, restore the integrity, of the critical natural cycles, methods and balances of Mother Earth;
- (g) Assurance that the damages caused by human violations of the inherent rights documented in this Declaration are resolved and that those responsible are held responsible for returning the integrity and health of Mother Earth;
- (h) Empower human beings and institutions to defend the rights of Mother Earth and of all beings;
- (i) Create preventive and restraining measures to prevent human activities from causing species extinction, the damage of ecosystems or the disruption of natural cycles;
- (j) Ensure peace in Wolastokuk (Maliseet Homeland)

(k) Promote and support practices of respect for Mother Earth and all beings, in accordance with their own cultures, traditions and customs;

(l) Support economic systems that are in harmony with Mother Earth and in agreement with the rights recognized in this Declaration.

#### **Article 4. Definitions**

(1) The term “being” includes ecosystems, natural communities, species and all other natural entities that exist as part of Mother Earth.

(2) Nothing in this Declaration restricts the recognition of other inherent rights of all beings or individual beings.

In Peace and Friendship,

Wolastoq Grand Chief spasaqsit possesom – Ron Tremblay