

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF POSTERITY

Whereas our descendants' generations, although likely to prove far more numerous than ourselves have no voice or vote in any of our political systems, we therefore declare that all the generations yet to come, for as far into the future as human life survives on this planet, are entitled by natural justice to the following rights, which those alive today have a duty to respect and uphold:

- (i) The right to inherit a planet that has been treated by its human caretakers with the utmost respect. And more particularly:
- (ii) The right to inherit a planet with an atmosphere undamaged by human activity, with safeguards for the planet's climate, such as the rainforests, still intact.
- (iii) The right to inherit a planet with an undiminished diversity of species.
- (iv) The right to inherit adequately maintained reserves of mineral, fuel and other resources.
- (v) The right to be born into a world of human-scale societies, unravaged by population excess.
- (vi) The right to inherit a world unmarred by nuclear or chemical wars, incidents or wastes.
- (vii) The right to expect that previous generations will have cleaned up their pollution, repaired their damaged environments, on land, sea and in the air (including outer space), and protected places of natural beauty.
- (viii) The right to inherit political, legal, technological and social systems that respect individual human rights, such as those laid out in the UN Declaration of Human Rights.
- (ix) The right to inherit the full, uncensored cultural heritage bequeathed by former generations, as expressed, for instance, in their art, history, literature, libraries and museums.
- (x) The right of future generations to have their interests considered and, where appropriate, represented by an advocate, in any present-day tribunal or assembly that is deciding courses of action that might have harmful long-term consequences.

Source: *The Council for Posterity, London, 1989.*