

**To: His Excellency Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations;  
Honorable Dr. Tedros Adhanom, Director-General of the World Health Organization;  
Honorable Joyce Msuya, Acting Executive Director of the U.N. Environment Program and Assistant Secretary-General of the U.N.;**  
**U.N. Member Nations**

**International Appeal**  
**for the insertion of the**  
**Right to Water and Air**  
**in the**

**Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations**

It is a fact that Water and Air are indispensable for the survival of the mankind and of every single person, and more generally of life on the planet Earth, in all its many forms and manifestations. Certain diseases in the evolution of economic and social structures, the development of technologies originally aimed at improving the quality of life, but often used solely for the purpose of greater economic profit, certain phenomena of arrogance and unscrupulous finance, wars and the devastation of enormous natural resources essential to the survival of life itself and of mankind lead us to have serious concerns about the real availability of water and air, already today and in the near future, to every human being and each one of them and to every other living being in general. We are not referring here, as regards water, to drought problems due to natural conditions and phenomena out of human control; or atmospheric pollution that can be generated for example during volcanic eruptions; we refer to the devastation by pollution or in other ways of water sources, rivers and lakes, which are by their nature common good of the whole mankind; we refer to the industrial or otherwise generated pollution, of vast airspace of the atmosphere that makes life on Earth possible. “Freshwater habitats, such as lakes, rivers and wetlands, are the source of life for all humans yet they are also the most threatened, strongly affected by a range of factors including habitat modification, fragmentation and destruction; invasive species; overfishing; pollution; disease; and climate change.”(WWF LP Report 2018, p.7, [https://www.wwf.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-10/LPR2018\\_Full%20Report.pdf](https://www.wwf.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-10/LPR2018_Full%20Report.pdf)). “Globally, wetland extent is estimated to have declined by more than 50% since 1900. Rivers are increasingly disconnected due to dams and other infrastructure, with reservoirs altering natural flow regimes and trapping an estimated > 25% of the

total sediment load globally that formerly reached the ocean.” (WWF LP Report 2018, p.66).

It is a fact that there is an indivisible unity between the atmospheric system and the water resources of the Earth, freshwater and marine; this same ecosystem, the “biosphere”, in its indivisible unity includes human beings and all living beings in the richness of their diversity and it guarantees their survival in the succession of generations. It makes food production possible and the same economy gets advantages from it. “Biosphere integrity plays a critical role in determining the state of the Earth system, regulating its material flows, energy balance, climate, and responses to abrupt and gradual change.” (WWF LP Report 2018, p.85).

It would be an unpardonable mistake to consider such a unitary vision of Nature as a residue of romanticism without a concrete scientific foundation. It is science, from physics to biology, from ecology to chemistry, which leads to this unitary vision; there are so many scientifically founded facts that point to such a unified vision that there would be no doubt that the thought of those who say the opposite hides only their will to overpower and their arrogance towards others and nature in general. This would also be a suicide because they, and with them all living beings, would be condemned by their own attitude to succumb to the planetary natural catastrophe induced by their behavior.

***It is therefore on these premises that we ask His Excellency Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, to the Honorable Tedros Adhanom, to the Honorable Joyce Msuya, to U.N. Member Nations to introduce in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights the Right to Water and Air, the very basis of life in all its forms, common good of humankind, without which any other right does not exist in fact. The universal Right to Water and Air is a necessary condition and adds scientific concreteness to the Right to Life stated in the Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.***

Various national agencies in various countries and in the same European Union, establish in different ways rules aimed at the protection of Water and Air. However, in the vast majority of cases these agencies fail to pursue and fulfill their mission not only because of the pressure exerted on them by interested lobbyists and criminal associations, but also because of the lack of indisputable references in terms of law. The consequence is that rivers, lakes and water sources are in constant danger. The inclusion of the Right to Water and Air among the fundamental human rights in the Universal Declaration will surely introduce a clear legal basis to appeal to.

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Note: the signatories to this appeal have signed as individuals, giving their professional affiliations, but this does not necessarily mean that this represents the views of their employers or the professional organizations they are affiliated with.