

Voices for Antarctica

Your voice can help shape how Antarctica is
recognised, protected and heard.

ANTARCTIC RIGHTS



ANTARCTIC
RIGHTS

Agenda

15:00 – 16:30

15:00 – 15:05



Opening

5 min

15:05 – 15:20



La campagna di Antarctic Rights | Roberta Bosu

15 min

15:20 – 15:35



La Dichiarazione dell'Antartide — Stefania Falcon

15 min

15:35 – 15:50



Domande

20 min

15:55 – 16:10



15 min

16:10 – 16:25



15 min

16:25 – 16:30



Closing and next steps

5 min

● Antarctic Rights Campaign

● The Declaration

● Discussion



Antarctica at the Edge

Nature, Power, and the Future
of Global Governance

ROBERTA BOSU



ANTARCTIC
RIGHTS

When did you last think about Antarctica?

Not recently, right?

But Antarctica carries your world anyway.



Antarctica is a planetary regulator

10%

of Earth's land surface

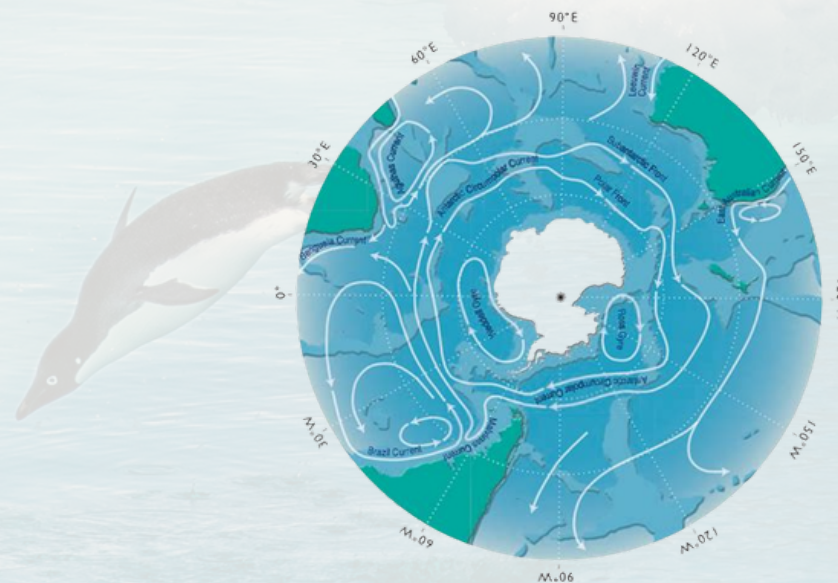


90%

of the world's
surface
freshwater

Drives global
ocean
circulation

distributing heat,
oxygen, nutrients
across every ocean
basin.



Antarctica's ice reflects up to
90% of incoming solar radiation
back to space.

Without it, **more heat is absorbed**, accelerating
every climate impact.

58

metres

of sea-level rise

held inside Antarctic ice

COMMUNITIES AT RISK

Miami

Tuvalu

Bangladesh Delta

Maldives

Pacific atoll reef systems

Venice

+58 m

0 m

What does a tipping point feel like before it tips?

Scientists tell us we may already be past several thresholds in Antarctica.



WARMING AIR & OCEAN

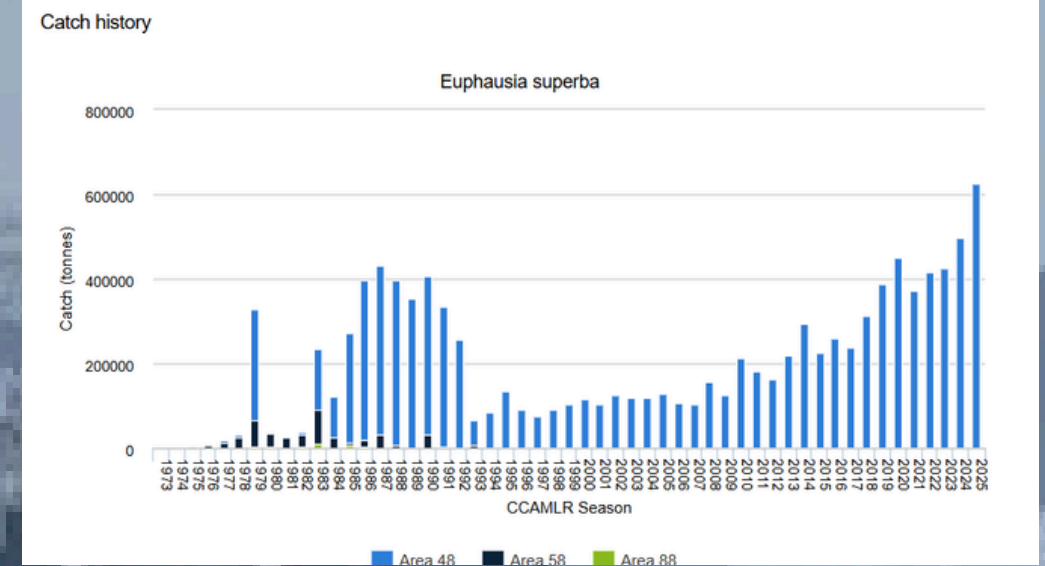
winter temperatures

+20°C

warmer than normal

OVERFISHING

The krill fishery in Antarctica has been officially shut down for the season after reaching the 620,000 metric ton catch limit for the second time in history. (early August rather than 30 November)



The emperor penguin and Antarctic fur seal have been reclassified as 'Endangered' on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species.

TOURISM



124k
visitors in 2025

Annual visitors numbered fewer than 8,000 in the 1990s.

Source: IAATO Vessel Overview, 2024–25 Season (2025)







Active Travel Experiences

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Antarctica: Our 7th Continent. Get There Before It Melts

Last Updated on November 4, 2024





These crises amplify each other.



**If Antarctica is the
Earth's life-support system,
who is responsible
for safeguarding it?**



The Antarctic Treaty System

Antarctic Treaty

12 nations freeze territorial claims, ban military activity

1959-1961

Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty

to develop a comprehensive regime for the protection of the Antarctic environment and dependent and associated ecosystems, in the interest of mankind as a whole.

1991-1998

Protocol review

Any Consultative Party may request a review conference. Any modification to Article 7 would require agreement by a majority of Consultative Parties, including three-quarters of those that were parties in 1991 and ratification by that same threshold before coming into force.

2048

1980-1982

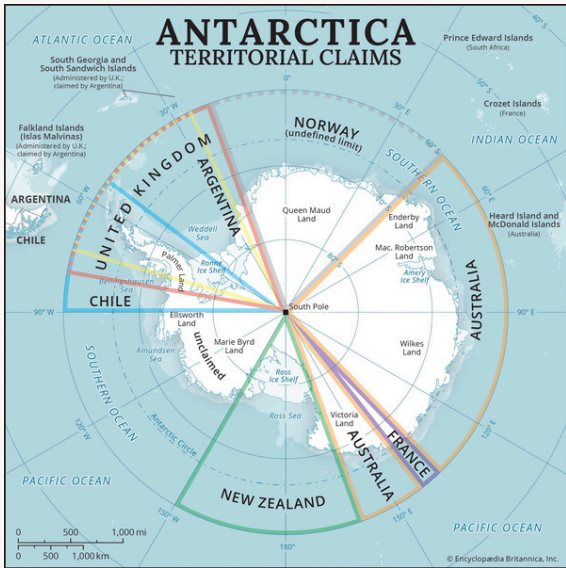
CCAMLR enters into force

The Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, the international body governing fishing and marine ecosystems in the Southern Ocean.

2026

58 treaty parties

Only 29 hold decision-making. Every decision requires consensus. A single holdout can block any measure.



The Treaty was built for a world of nation-states. We need governance for a shared planet.



What did the world know in 1959?

*The Antarctic Treaty is one of the great achievements of modern diplomacy.
The question isn't whether it has served Antarctica well it's whether it was ever designed for the
questions we now face.*

What if Antarctica could speak for itself?



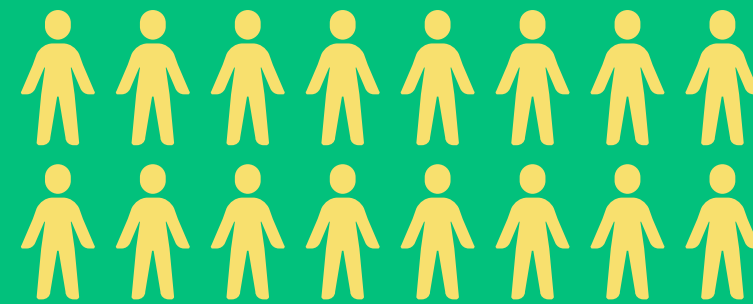
Antarctic Rights

A global civil society initiative advocating for legal recognition of Antarctica as an autonomous, rights-bearing entity under international law.

THE MOVEMENT TODAY

16

founding members



Antarctic scientists, artists, academics, environmental lawyers, activists, indigenous representatives, rights of Nature experts

350

individuals

90+

organisations



Inherent rights. A voice in its own future.

*We advocate for Antarctica to be recognised as a **living entity with inherent rights**:*

01 To exist

The inherent right of Antarctica and all its beings to exist and be respected.

02 To regenerate

To restore its natural cycles, free from activities that compromise its integrity.

03 To evolve

To continue evolving on its own terms — ecologically, geologically, climatically.

04 To be represented

To have its interests voiced in decisions that determine its future.

The Antarctica Declaration

This document defines Antarctica's legal status and rights, outlining the freedoms of all Antarctic beings.

WHAT IT ESTABLISHES

01

Legal personhood

Antarctica recognised as a subject of rights, not an object of competing national claims.

02

Rights and duties

Recognition of inherent rights and freedoms of Antarctica and Antarctic beings that cannot be revoked, and corresponding duties of people and states to respect and protect those rights.

03

Antarctica's agency

Recognition of Antarctica as a global actor entitled to have a voice in decision making that affects it.

Is Antarctic Rights *just a radical idea*?

THE ATS IS A FOUNDATION

A pioneering model since 1959.

Peaceful cooperation. Scientific collaboration. A mining ban. Environmental protection. Marine protected areas under CCAMLR. Intrinsic value recognised in the Madrid Protocol.

WHERE THE GAP IS

Built for 1959, strained in 2026.

Threats from outside the Treaty area (climate crisis). Consensus gridlock. No mechanism to give Antarctica itself legal standing. The only permanent residents of Antarctica have no voice in its governance.

The foundations **already exist.**

ALREADY IN THE TREATY SYSTEM

Intrinsic value.

The Madrid Protocol (1991) **already recognises Antarctica's intrinsic value (art 3.1)**

“The protection of the Antarctic environment and dependent and associated ecosystems and the intrinsic value of Antarctica, including its wilderness and aesthetic values and its value as an area for the conduct of scientific research”

What is missing is a mechanism that gives that recognition legal consequences.

ALREADY LIVE LAW GLOBALLY

Rights of Nature.

Recognised in constitutions, statutes and court rulings around the world. Endorsed by the UN Secretary-General.

“It is the fastest-growing legal movement of this century.”

Rights of nature is already working all over the world

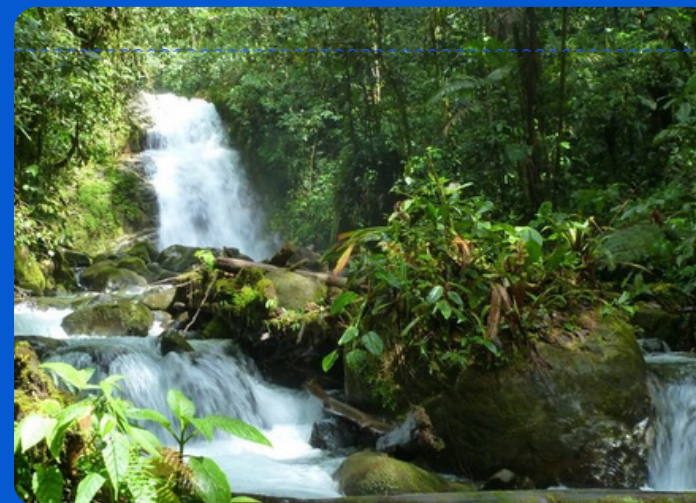
687

rights-of-nature
initiatives worldwide

66

countries with laws,
policies or rulings

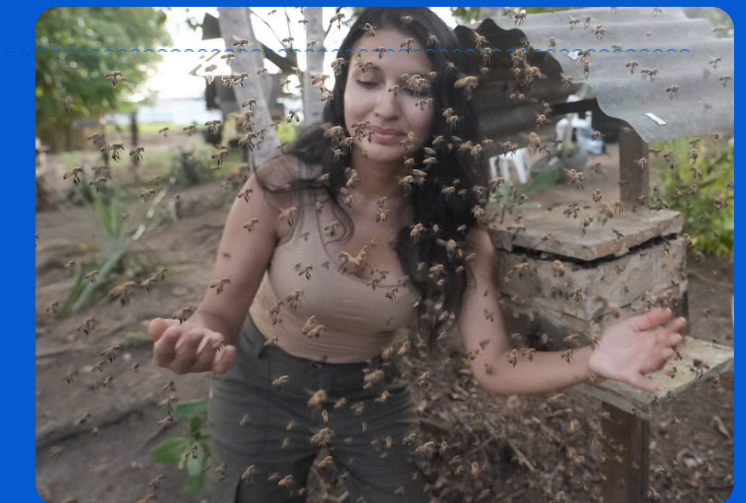
Los Cedros (Ecuador)



Marañón River, (Peru)



Stingless bees (Amazon)



Mar Menor (Spain)



Whanganui River (New Zealand)



Magpie River (Canada)



Antarctica would be the largest - and most consequential - Rights of Nature case in history.

This is unprecedented.
We don't pretend we have every answer.

01

**Who speaks for
Antarctica?**

**Composition, mandate and
accountability of a guardian
body are genuinely open
design questions.**

02

**How does it coexist
with the current
system?**

**The legal architecture
needs co-design.**

03

**What do the rights mean
in practice?**

**From fishing quotas to tourism to
research, the operational
translation is still to be written.**

This declaration must be written **with** the community, not handed **to** it.

LEGAL SCHOLARS

Treaty architecture, RoN jurisprudence

POLAR SCIENTISTS

What an "ecosystem interest" looks like in data

GOVERNMENTS & DELEGATES

Political feasibility inside the ATS

NGOs & CIVIL SOCIETY

Mandate, accountability, reach

Yes, we want also your hard questions!

From a working group to a global alliance.

2021



Working group forms

International experts — academics, scientists, lawyers, indigenous voices, RON experts, activists

2023



Public launch and draft Declaration

On World Antarctica Day, the Antarctic Rights initiative is unveiled. Draft Declaration opens for discussion.

2025



Antarctica Alliance officially launched

IUCN Motion 055 (now Resolution 054) passed. 1 December · synchronised launch across Amsterdam, Cape Town, San Francisco, Cambridge, Auckland.

2026



Focus: the Declaration

Finalise the Antarctica Declaration through open consultation and signature event in Cape Town in December during Antarctic Rights Festival in Cape Town (Nov 30 -Dec 4)

From consultation to signing.



Input window: July – September 2026 | **Signing event:** December 2026 · Cape Town

Get involved



JOIN THE ALLIANCE

01 Respond to the consultation

July – September 2026

02 Join the Antarctic Rights Alliance

03 Bring a question, a critique, a feedback

antarcticrights@garn.org



The spirit of the Declaration

***We, the peoples of Earth,
are all part of the Earth Community-
an indivisible, living community of
interrelated and interdependent beings.***

From the Preamble to the Antarctica Declaration (draft, 30 November 2023)

