Pronouncement in El Salvador Deems Forests to be Living Entities

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 5, 2019

Contacts: Eneas Wilfredo Martínez Santos (eneaswilfredo@gmail.com, +503 70841322)
Roberto Carlos Olivares Martínez (rocolicaires@gmail.com, +503 77962043)
Grant Wilson (gwilson@earthlaw.org, +1 510-566-1063)

Ahuachapán, El Salvador: Today, on World Environment Day, the Legislative Assembly of El Salvador approved a pronouncement deeming that “forests are living entities.” The pronouncement also states that each person must commit to caring for, preserving, and respecting forests, and to promoting concrete actions that expand forests in El Salvador. This historic recognition was part of a larger pronouncement in support of a healthy environment.

“Recognizing forests as living entities sets the stage for a new paradigm in El Salvador in which humans live in harmony with forests and respect them as more than just property,” said El Salvadorian lawyer Eneas Wilfredo Martínez Santos. “Without thriving natural forests, our planet cannot support humans nor millions of other species that rely upon healthy ecosystems.”

Over the last year, a coalition of environmental and social leaders—including lawyers, engineers, and university students—have called for recognition of the Rights of Nature in El Salvador. In recent months, the coalition, Yes for the Rights of Nature (“Sí por los Derechos de la Naturaleza”), has focused on a campaign to recognize forests as living entities.

El Salvador has lost about 85 percent of its native forests since the 1960s, and the planet as a whole has lost about 80 percent of its native forests. But in recent years, El Salvador has made a strong commitment to restoring its native landscapes.

“Today’s pronouncement shows El Salvador’s commitment to new forms of governance that consider the needs of ecosystems,” said Grant Wilson, Directing Attorney at Earth Law Center, which has provided legal support on the Rights of Nature in El Salvador. “We hope that El Salvador can inspire many other countries to take similar actions.”

#  #  #


Earth Law Center works to transform the law to recognize and protect nature’s inherent rights to exist, thrive and evolve. Visit www.earthlawcenter.org.