

# AFRICA PROGRAM AWARENESS AND IMPACT REPORT 2024



In 2024, Earth Law Center Africa and its partners made significant strides in advancing the Rights of Nature movement in Nigeria and in Cape Town, South Africa. We placed particular focus on Nigeria's River Ethiope Watershed (Africa's deepest inland waterway) and the Katampe Hill Waterfalls in Abuja.

## Achievements



### Stakeholders Capacity Building and Engagement

We hosted successful workshops and outreach initiatives, educating all key stakeholders about the Rights of Nature. And we fostered grassroots support for the protection and personhood of the River Ethiope and Katampe Hill Waterfalls, located in Abuja.

### Legal Framework Development

Collaborations with legal experts resulted in preliminary drafts of proposals advocating for the legal recognition of the River Ethiope and Katampe Hill Waterfalls as living entities with rights, laying the groundwork for future legal action in Africa.



### Restoration Initiatives

We led implementation of initial restoration projects, focusing on reforestation and pollution mitigation, thus contributing to the ecological health of the River Ethiope Watershed and Katampe Hill Waterfalls and streams.

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## New Partnerships

Initiated partnership and collaboration with Nigeria Maritime University, Okorenkoko, Delta State Nigeria, focused on Africa Ocean rights research, education, and advocacy. Partnership agreement to be concluded in February 2025.

## Awareness Campaigns

Public awareness campaigns highlighted the importance of the ecological integrity of the River Ethiope and Katampe Hill Waterfalls, enhancing community and stakeholders' engagement. Rights of Nature awareness and education initiatives reached over 1,000 persons in Nigeria.

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## Award and Recognition:

"2024 Environmental Stewardship Award" by *Environmental Outreach Magazine* awarded to Earth Law Center for advancing eco-centric laws, policies, and governance for the well-being of the Earth Community. Official presentation of the award was performed on the December 12th, 2024

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## 3 Key Success

Restoration, protection and **recognition of River Ethiope as having legal personhood with rights**

**Upgrading River Ethiope Watershed** to National Freshwater Park

**Launching of Katampe Hill Waterfalls Restoration Project**, with aim for designation as National Park and personhood recognition

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**In 2025, we aim to build on this progress by:**

→ **Legal Recognition Efforts:** Continuing to advocate for the formal recognition of the rights of River Ethiope, and their implementation

→ **Save Katampe Hill Campaign:** Shall officially launch campaign for Katampe Hill Waterfalls Restoration, Protection, & Declaration as a National Park with legal personhood as a second pilot project in the northern part of Nigeria.

→ **Expanded Restoration Projects:** Scaling up restoration initiatives to include more comprehensive habitat restoration, improved water quality monitoring, and community-led conservation efforts in and around River Ethiope and Katampe Hill ecosystems in Nigeria.

→ **Education and Training:** Implementing more extensive training programs for key community members/stakeholders to foster sustainable practices and stewardship of the River Ethiope and Katampe Hill Watersheds.

→ **Official launch of ELC Activities in South Africa:** Shall officially commence ELC activities in Cape Town, South Africa through participation in the forthcoming GreenPop Reforest Festival in April 2025.

→ **Signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Nigeria Maritime University (NMU):** ELC will officially sign an MoU with NMU in February 2025 to commence Ocean rights campaign in Africa, starting with Nigeria, and this shall involve the joint establishment of the Center for Ocean Research and Protection(CoRP) at Nigeria Maritime University by both parties.

Together, these efforts will help ensure the advancement of the Rights of Nature movement in Nigeria and South Africa.

**Irikefe V. Dafe**

**Founder, River Ethiope Trust Foundation & Africa Lead, Earth Law Center**

