

Legal rights to non-humans

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About Legal rights to non-humans:

- **Ecuador**, in 2008, approved a Constitution that grants tropical forests, islands, rivers and air, legal rights to “exist, flourish and evolve”. In April 2022 **Ecuador became the first country to grant legal rights to individual wild animals.**
- **Bolivia** granted all nature rights equal to that of humans in 2011.
- **New Zealand** in 2017, passed the Whanganui River Claims Settlement Bill, which granted legal personhood to **river Whanganui** and its surrounding ecosystem.

Where does India stand?

- **Article 51-A (g)** of the Constitution of India lays down that it is the fundamental duty of every citizen to protect wildlife and have compassion for all living creatures. However, **such duties are not enforceable by law.**
- The Uttarakhand High Court in 2017, granted the **river Ganga and its longest tributary Yamuna the legal right to be protected and not be harmed.**

- While other legal acts such as the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 and the Cruelty to Animals Act of 1960 exist, they do not recognize animals as individual living entities.

Bio age

- The increased integration of biotechnology in human life will bring in the bio age.
- Integration of life sciences with modern technology through the production of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), engineering of genes to enhance disease resistance, gene editing, and more, indicate that biotechnology is most likely to pervade our lives in the future.
- It will mark the end of the digital Information Age and this era will require legal intervention to hold researchers accountable for the impact of their work on the environment.

Source : Indian Express

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