



THE FIFTEEN COMMITMENTS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

For the Implementation of the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights

Preamble

Trees are living beings and constitute a common good of humankind. They are essential to biodiversity, climate stability, public health, quality of life, and the well-being of present and future generations.

Local and regional authorities play a decisive role in their protection, development, and transmission to future generations. Through their planning policies, their management of public spaces, and their protection of the living world, they possess essential levers for advancing Tree Rights.

The Universal Declaration of Tree Rights sets out the fundamental principles that provide the foundation for the action of local and regional authorities in favour of Tree Rights. The International Convention on Tree Rights is intended to constitute, at the level of States, the framework for the progressive legal implementation of these principles. It already exists as a reference text currently being further developed; it is not yet an international instrument adopted, signed, and ratified by States. The Assembly of the Tree is a local body for dialogue, citizen participation, reflection, and proposal, designed to enable the competent authorities to make informed decisions consistent with the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights.

The adoption of the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights by a local or regional authority is accompanied by the adoption of the present roadmap. Through these fifteen commitments, the authority affirms its willingness to progressively implement the principles of the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights across all its public policies.

These commitments constitute a voluntary, progressive, and evolving approach. They may be adapted to the realities, competences, and resources of each local or regional authority, in a spirit of responsibility, cooperation, citizen participation, and transmission to future generations.

The fifteen commitments do not constitute a succession of independent measures. They form a progressive method of governance enabling local and regional authorities to implement the principles of the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights. This method is structured around five complementary stages: governing, knowing, acting, preserving, and transmitting.

I. GOVERNING

Establishing the institutions that will bring Tree Rights to life

The recognition of Tree Rights requires appropriate governance. The local or regional authority establishes the bodies for dialogue, vigilance, and participation that will support the progressive implementation of the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights.

COMMITMENT 1

Establish an Assembly of the Tree

The local or regional authority shall establish an Assembly of the Tree of [name of the authority], as a permanent consultative body bringing together elected officials, public services, experts, associations, citizens, and relevant stakeholders.

It shall support the local implementation of the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights and may contribute, through its observations and feedback from experience, to the progressive enrichment of the International Convention on Tree Rights.

COMMITMENT 2

Appoint a Defender of the Tree

The local or regional authority shall appoint an independent person or body responsible for receiving alerts, formulating recommendations, and ensuring respect for the principles of the Declaration.

II. KNOWING

Identifying, understanding, and enhancing the tree heritage

It is impossible to protect what is not known. The local or regional authority identifies its remarkable trees, develops knowledge of its tree heritage, and uses this information to support their preservation.

COMMITMENT 3

Recognize Guardian Trees

The local or regional authority shall identify trees of particular ecological, historical, cultural, scientific, or landscape interest, and shall grant them appropriate protection.

COMMITMENT 4

Create the Guardian Tree Passport

Each Guardian Tree shall benefit from a public record setting out its history, characteristics, ecological, historical, cultural, scientific, or landscape interest, as well as the protective measures from which it benefits.

COMMITMENT 5

Know the Trees of the Authority

The local or regional authority shall carry out an inventory of the trees present within its territory and shall ensure that this inventory is regularly updated.

III. ACTING

Translating principles into concrete public policies

The local or regional authority implements actions intended to preserve existing trees, develop the canopy, involve citizens, and fully integrate trees into planning decisions.

COMMITMENT 6

Develop the Canopy

The local or regional authority shall set measurable objectives for the preservation, restoration, and development of tree cover.

COMMITMENT 7

Involve Citizens

Any inhabitant may report a threat to a tree, or participate in actions undertaken in favour of Tree Rights.

COMMITMENT 8

Preserve the Vital Environment of Trees

Public and private projects shall take into account the protection of root systems, soils, and the conditions necessary for the proper development of trees.

COMMITMENT 9

Regulate Felling

Any removal of a tree of interest shall be subject to prior examination based on transparent criteria.

COMMITMENT 10

Ensure Ecological Compensation

Where a tree is removed, appropriate compensation measures shall be implemented according to the ecological characteristics of the **site**.

COMMITMENT 11

Assess the Impact of Projects

Development projects shall take into consideration their consequences for existing trees and for the future development of the canopy.

IV. PRESERVING

Making the living world a common good to be protected

Beyond the protection of trees themselves, the local or regional authority affirms an overall vision of the living world. It acts in favour of health, climate, biodiversity, and quality of life, recognizing the Tree as an essential element of the common good.

COMMITMENT 12

Guarantee the Right to Shade

The local or regional authority shall ensure the development of tree-covered public spaces that promote thermal comfort, health, and adaptation to climate change.

COMMITMENT 13

Preserve the Living Common Good

The local or regional authority shall identify and enhance the principal elements of the living world present within its territory, with particular attention to Guardian Trees.

V. TRANSMITTING

Embedding action in the long term

The protection of trees is part of a responsibility towards future generations. The local or regional authority regularly evaluates the progress achieved and ensures the transmission of a living heritage that is at least equivalent, and where possible enriched.

COMMITMENT 14

Evaluate Progress Achieved

The local or regional authority shall regularly publish a report on the actions undertaken and the results achieved in favour of Tree Rights.

COMMITMENT 15

Transmit a Strengthened Common Good

The local or regional authority undertakes to transmit to future generations a living common good that is at least equivalent, and where possible enriched, in accordance with the principles of the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights.

Conclusion

By adopting these fifteen commitments, the local or regional authority affirms its willingness to make the Tree an essential partner in its development, its climate resilience, the preservation of biodiversity, and the quality of life of its inhabitants.

These commitments constitute a first roadmap for local and regional authorities wishing to translate the principles of the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights into concrete local policies.

They are intended to be adapted to the competences, resources, and ecological realities of each territory, while remaining within the general spirit of the Declaration, the International Convention on Tree Rights, and the Assembly of the Tree.

Each local or regional authority remains free to adapt the **practical arrangements for implementing this roadmap**, in accordance with the principles set out by the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights and in the spirit of the International Convention on Tree Rights.

Together, the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights, the International Convention on Tree Rights, the Assembly of the Tree, and the present fifteen commitments constitute a coherent framework designed to support local and regional authorities in the recognition and progressive implementation of Tree Rights.