



PRESS KIT

First municipal adoption of the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights

Terrasse-Vaudreuil (Quebec, Canada)

Resolution adopted unanimously on June 9, 2026



Terrasse-Vaudreuil Municipal Council at the adoption of the resolution.

UPDATED VERSION

July 29, 2026

SECTION 1

Executive summary

A world first and a now-clarified institutional framework

On June 9, 2026, Terrasse-Vaudreuil became the first municipality in the world to officially adopt the principles of the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights.

The decision was adopted unanimously by the municipal council through a resolution entitled “Municipal Commitment to Canopy Protection and Recognition of the Fundamental Rights of Trees.” For the first time, it brings the principles of the Declaration into the sphere of local public action.

This updated press kit replaces the previous version. It clarifies the Declaration’s official institutional stewardship, its precise legal scope, the distinction between its Three Foundational Articles and the four operational rights added by the municipal resolution, and the circumstances in which the world’s first municipal adoption was prepared and subsequently regularized institutionally.

DATE	June 9, 2026	LOCATION	Terrasse-Vaudreuil, Quebec, Canada
DECISION	Municipal resolution adopted unanimously	SIGNIFICANCE	First official adoption of this Declaration by a public authority anywhere in the world
TEXT	Three Foundational Articles	LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION	Four distinct operational rights: life, natural growth, integrity and regeneration
OFFICIAL STEWARD	La Compagnie des Papillons Bleus	SUPPORT	More than 87,000 supporters worldwide

KEY POINT

Municipal adoption does not create legal personhood

The Universal Declaration of Tree Rights does not confer legal personhood on trees; legal personhood is not provided for in its text.

The Declaration likewise does not confer standing on trees. These are distinct legal mechanisms.

SECTION 2

Institutional clarification concerning the OIDN

Local contribution acknowledged; no mandate of representation

The International Observatory on Nature's Rights (OIDN) and its president, Yenny Vega Cárdenas, contributed to the local mobilization that preceded Terrasse-Vaudreuil's adoption. That contribution should be acknowledged. It does not, however, confer any mandate to represent, officially interpret, govern or institutionally develop the Declaration.

The Universal Declaration of Tree Rights is an autonomous initiative conceived, founded and developed under the responsibility of La Compagnie des Papillons Bleus, which is its founding organization and official institutional steward.

PRECISE INSTITUTIONAL STATUS	CONSEQUENCE
The OIDN is neither the author nor the founding or stewarding organization of the Declaration.	It may not present itself as the Declaration's source, administrator, institutional authority or official representative.
The OIDN holds no written mandate of representation.	It may not speak officially on behalf of La Compagnie des Papillons Bleus or determine the institutional interpretation of the Declaration.
The OIDN is not authorized to officially assist municipalities.	Any interested public authority must contact La Compagnie des Papillons Bleus directly.
The OIDN is not authorized to centralize requests concerning the Declaration.	Municipal, media, academic or institutional inquiries must be redirected to the official stewarding organization.
The Fifteen Commitments, the Assembly of the Tree and the proposed Convention are not OIDN programs.	These instruments are not under its administration or governance.
The right to report, analyze, comment or quote remains fully respected.	Any reference must remain accurate, proportionate, properly attributed and must not create an appearance of mandate, partnership or institutional stewardship.

OFFICIAL CONTACT

La Compagnie des Papillons Bleus
presidence@ciedespapillonsbleus.org

Official Framework: <https://www.declarationuniverselledesdroitsdelarbre.org/cadre-officiel-de-la-declaration-universelle-des-droits-de-larbre/>

SECTION 3

Origins and official stewardship

An initiative launched in Paris in 2018 and developed within an autonomous institutional framework

The Universal Declaration of Tree Rights originated in the World Appeal launched in Paris on November 18, 2018, by Ricardo Rey.

The Appeal opened an international reflection connecting ethics, science, law, democracy, culture, education and public action. It progressively led to the Declaration, the Assembly of the Tree, the Fifteen Commitments for local and regional authorities and the proposed International Convention on Tree Rights.

La Compagnie des Papillons Bleus is the founding organization and official steward of the Declaration and its institutional development.



Ricardo Rey

Author and founder of the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights

Founder of the Assembly of the Tree

Founder of the proposed International Convention on Tree Rights

President of La Compagnie des Papillons Bleus

NOV. 18, 2018	JUNE 9, 2026	JULY 2026
Paris Launch of the World Appeal.	Terrasse-Vaudreuil First official adoption by a municipality.	Direct coordination Institutional relations between the Municipality and La Compagnie des Papillons Bleus are regularized.

GOVERNANCE

Contribution does not constitute a mandate

Participation in a meeting, translation, event, interview, local mobilization or collective project does not, by itself, constitute a mandate of representation, an institutional partnership or a delegation of authority.

SECTION 4

The Three Foundational Articles

The foundational text and its ethical and normative progression

The Declaration consists of three short, interdependent articles. They recognize the living nature of the Tree, affirm planetary interdependence and establish human responsibility.

ARTICLE 1

The Tree, a sensitive living being and source of Life, is a common good of humanity.

ARTICLE 2

Life on the planet depends on the existence of the Tree.

ARTICLE 3

Humankind, endowed with reason and conscience, must act with the Tree in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity.

Taken together, these articles form a common foundation of ethical, scientific, political and legal principles. They are intended to inform public policy, institutional practice, collective decision-making and the future development of law.

PRECISE LEGAL SCOPE

The Declaration does not, by itself, constitute a statute, regulation, judicial decision or international treaty currently in force.

It grants no new authority to a municipality, and any binding measure must be adopted under the applicable law, procedures, budgets and powers of the relevant public authority.

SECTION 5

Legal personhood, standing and Christopher Stone

Three distinct concepts that must not be conflated

OFFICIAL POSITION

Legal personhood is not provided for by the Declaration

The Universal Declaration of Tree Rights does not confer legal personhood on trees; legal personhood is not provided for in its text.

The Declaration also does not confer standing on trees.

CONCEPT	SUBJECT	POSITION OF THE DECLARATION
Legal personhood	A legal status allowing an entity to hold rights and obligations within a particular legal system.	A distinct legal construct sometimes used for specific natural entities. It is neither the foundation, a condition nor a consequence of the Three Articles.
Standing	A procedural requirement governing access to a court or representation before it.	It is not conferred by the Declaration and is not a condition of its adoption.
Universal Declaration of Tree Rights	An ethical, scientific and normative progression founded on the living nature of the Tree, interdependence and human responsibility.	An autonomous framework capable of implementation through a range of legal and public-policy mechanisms.

Christopher D. Stone's theory in *Should Trees Have Standing?* (1972) primarily concerns access to justice and the procedural representation of natural entities. The Declaration is neither a transposition nor a necessary extension of that theory.

Official analysis:

<https://www.declarationuniverselledesdroitsdelarbre.org/christopher-stone-declaration-universelle-droits-arbre/>

SECTION 6

A complete institutional architecture

From the Declaration to territorial implementation and the proposed international instrument

INSTRUMENT	FUNCTION	STATUS
Universal Declaration of Tree Rights	Foundational text comprising Three Articles.	A framework of principles; it does not by itself constitute a statute or treaty.
Fifteen Commitments	A progressive roadmap for public authorities: govern, understand, act, preserve and transmit.	Implementation can be adapted to the authority's powers, resources and territorial characteristics.
Assembly of the Tree	An advisory forum for dialogue, participation, circulation of knowledge and proposals.	It exercises no judicial, regulatory or administrative power.
Proposed International Convention on Tree Rights	A proposed instrument intended for States and competent international organizations.	Not adopted, signed or ratified; no treaty obligations are currently in force.
International Register	Traceability of adoptions completed under the official procedure.	It creates no additional power, special legal personhood or international obligation.

This architecture connects principles with governance, knowledge of tree heritage, public policy, civic participation, the protection of living environments, education and the evaluation of results.

COORDINATION PRINCIPLE

Every official adoption, institutional representation and official use of these instruments must comply with the Official Framework and be handled directly through La Compagnie des Papillons Bleus.

SECTION 7

Terrasse-Vaudreuil: the world's first adoption

The municipal resolution of June 9, 2026

The municipal council unanimously adopted the resolution entitled “Municipal Commitment to Canopy Protection and Recognition of the Fundamental Rights of Trees.”

The Municipality adheres to the principles of the Declaration and directly recognizes Trees as living beings deserving protection. It places this recognition within a municipal governance framework connected to canopy protection and public policy.

TEXT OF THE DECLARATION	OPERATIONAL ADDITIONS IN THE MUNICIPAL RESOLUTION
Three Articles 1. The Tree as a sensitive living being, source of Life and common good of humanity. 2. Interdependence between the existence of the Tree and Life on the planet. 3. Human responsibility grounded in fraternity and solidarity.	Four distinct municipal rights - right to life - right to natural growth - right to integrity - right to regeneration

The four operational rights neither replace nor amend the Three Articles of the Declaration. They are a distinct municipal translation adopted by Terrasse-Vaudreuil in its resolution.

Terrasse-Vaudreuil's decision is the first institutional implementation of this Declaration by a public authority. It does not mean that trees became legal persons and does not, by itself, create standing.

Official resolution: [Download the municipal document](#)

SECTION 8

Local mobilization and institutional regularization

A historic adoption whose official coordination has now been restored

The local mobilization developed following the screening of the documentary *Des arbres et des arts* by filmmaker André Desrochers. It involved residents, the Terrasse-Vaudreuil Environment Committee, Yenny Vega Cárdenas and the International Observatory on Nature's Rights.

INITIAL PROCESS

La Compagnie des Papillons Bleus and Ricardo Rey were not consulted, involved or informed in advance of the municipal process that led to the adoption.

La Compagnie did not participate in the initial preparation of the municipal resolution, the drafting of the press release announcing it or the initial media arrangements.

This lack of prior coordination does not in any way diminish the historical importance of the decision adopted independently by the municipal council. It does, however, explain why the initial communications did not present the entire Official Framework, including the Fifteen Commitments, the Assembly of the Tree, the Declaration's institutional stewardship and the necessary distinctions concerning its legal scope.

CURRENT SITUATION

The relationship with the Municipality has now been regularized

La Compagnie des Papillons Bleus is now in direct contact with the Municipality of Terrasse-Vaudreuil through its general administration.

This dialogue is intended to ensure follow-up to the adoption, an accurate public presentation of the Declaration and consideration of its progressive implementation, with due respect for each party's institutional responsibilities.

This regularization concerns the relationship between the Municipality and La Compagnie. It does not retroactively validate actions undertaken by third parties without a mandate or recognize a power of representation that was never expressly granted.

SECTION 9

From adoption to territorial implementation

A progressive and realistic method adapted to local powers

Adopting the Declaration is a starting point. It may be followed by a progressive process structured around the Fifteen Commitments and, where appropriate, the creation of a Territorial Assembly of the Tree.

1. GOVERN	Establish the institutions, responsibilities and processes through which Tree Rights can be implemented.
2. UNDERSTAND	Identify, document and understand tree heritage and the living environments on which it depends.
3. ACT	Translate the principles into public policy, planning, land use, management and education.
4. PRESERVE	Strengthen the protection of Trees, soils, water, biodiversity and ecological connectivity.
5. TRANSMIT	Evaluate results, report publicly and pass on a strengthened living heritage to future generations.

These Commitments are not a list of immediate, uniform obligations. They form a common roadmap whose implementation may be adapted to the authority's powers, resources, applicable law and territorial ecological characteristics.

ASSEMBLY OF THE TREE

No Assembly of the Tree is currently presented as having been officially established in Terrasse-Vaudreuil.

Its possible establishment may be considered through the direct dialogue between the Municipality and La Compagnie des Papillons Bleus. The Assembly is an advisory body and exercises no judicial, regulatory or administrative power.

SECTION 10

An autonomous international initiative

87,000 supporters and a precedent for public authorities

Since 2018, the Declaration has brought together an international network of citizens, legal professionals, scientists, Tree and forestry professionals, artists, associations, educators, elected officials and civil-society representatives.

87 000

people have expressed support
for the Declaration

2018

launch of the World Appeal in
Paris

2026

first official adoption by a
municipality

The initiative has developed in France and in several other territories, including Canada, Belgium, Spain, Italy, Ireland, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar. Its activities include public awareness, research, legal reflection, educational and cultural projects, territorial cooperation and the development of governance tools.

The Declaration shares with the Rights of Nature movement the objective of strengthening protection for the living world. It is not, however, a derivative, institutional branch or extension of that movement. These initiatives can engage in dialogue and cooperate while retaining their own foundations, architectures and objectives.

MUNICIPAL PRECEDENT

Terrasse-Vaudreuil demonstrates that a public authority can recognize the principles of the Declaration and incorporate them into a public decision without resorting to legal personhood for trees.

This world first creates space for experimentation in canopy policy, land-use planning, civic participation, education and the protection of living environments.

SECTION 11

Media guidance and official contacts

Reference wording, documents and the official institutional contact

- **World first:** Terrasse-Vaudreuil is the first municipality in the world to officially adopt the principles of this Declaration through a municipal resolution.
- **Author and founder:** Ricardo Rey.
- **Founding organization and official steward:** La Compagnie des Papillons Bleus.
- **Text:** Three Foundational Articles.
- **Municipal resolution:** four distinct operational rights added by Terrasse-Vaudreuil.
- **Legal personhood:** neither conferred nor provided for by the text.
- **Standing:** not conferred by the Declaration.
- **Assembly of the Tree:** an advisory body, not currently presented as officially established in Terrasse-Vaudreuil.
- **International Convention:** a proposed instrument, not a treaty in force.
- **OIDN:** local contribution acknowledged, but no mandate of representation or official municipal assistance.

DOCUMENT OR RESOURCE	OFFICIAL ADDRESS
Official article on Terrasse-Vaudreuil	https://www.declarationuniverselledesdroitsdelarbre.org/une-premiere-mondiale-au-canada-la-municipalite-de-terrasse-vaudreuil-signe-la-declaration-universelle-des-droits-de-larbre/
Municipal resolution	https://www.declarationuniverselledesdroitsdelarbre.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/2026-06-111Protection-canopee-Declaration-Universelle-des-Droits-de-lArbre.pdf
Official Framework	https://www.declarationuniverselledesdroitsdelarbre.org/cadre-officiel-de-la-declaration-universelle-des-droits-de-larbre/
Christopher Stone and the Declaration	https://www.declarationuniverselledesdroitsdelarbre.org/christopher-stone-declaration-universelle-droits-arbre/
International website	https://www.duda-udtr.org/

REFERENCE WORDING

“On June 9, 2026, Terrasse-Vaudreuil became the first municipality in the world to officially adopt the principles of the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights through a resolution of its municipal council.”

This wording clearly distinguishes the text of the Declaration, the operational additions made by the municipal resolution and the fact that the Declaration does not provide for legal personhood.

SECTION 12

Media and institutional contact

Official contact and conditions governing use of this press kit

OFFICIAL CONTACT

Ricardo Rey - La Compagnie des Papillons Bleus

Author and founder of the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights
Founder of the Assembly of the Tree
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OFFICIAL INSTITUTIONAL PUBLICATION

Reference press kit

Published by La Compagnie des Papillons Bleus.

This version, updated on July 29, 2026, replaces the previous version and constitutes the reference press kit concerning the first municipal adoption of the Universal Declaration of Tree Rights.

All requests for institutional interpretation, authorization, correction or verification must be directed to La Compagnie des Papillons Bleus.

MESSAGE TO NEWSROOMS

Accuracy of attribution and legal scope is essential: the OIDN contributed to the local mobilization, but it does not represent the Declaration; the four municipal rights are distinct from its Three Articles; and legal personhood for trees is not provided for in the text.