

The Rights of Living Things

Welcome to our Future

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A World of Difference

The Rights of Living Things seeks to encourage discussion and debate about the way life is defined and valued. This document sets out the entitlements of living things and the conduct of sentient beings as an ethical foundation of articles. Each article presents an essential principle. How these principles are adopted and applied is a matter for communities and law makers and should be the focus of transparent and impassioned deliberation. Two ideas form the basis for the declaration:

Rights: ethical and legal entitlements to have or do something. Aspirations of how things should be.

Sentience: the ability to feel pleasure and pain, the desire to exert choice. Sentient beings have periods of consciousness and self-awareness, and the potential to experience emotion.

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www.TheRightsOfLivingThings.Earth

Language attempts to bridge the gap between the world of the individual and the many. I hope The Rights of Living Things helps in our understanding and love of life as we explore its potential together.

Mike de Sousa - Oakley, England - 1st January 2016

The Rights of Living Things

Article 1 - The Right to be Recognized as a Living Entity

This declaration holds that the definition of life extends from organic to partially-organic and non-organic beings who are sentient.

Supplement to Article 1

Life has been defined as the condition that physical entities having biological processes possess, and includes the capacity for growth, reproduction, functional activity, and continual change preceding death. A crucial condition of life has been that it is organic and has the ability to metabolize (the physical and chemical processes which an organism's material substance is produced, maintained, and destroyed, and by which energy is made available). Humans, animals, plants and insects are examples of organic life.

A partial-organic is a being that functions using both organic and non-organic elements. Being partially-organic is when a prosthetic device is implanted or incorporated onto or into the body to replace or supplement the original biological part (for example possessing an artificial limb or heart). Technological progress in the field of biomedical enhancement is set to increase exponentially, and the level of non-organic and designed elements that will be found on and in humans will multiply.

A non-organic is a being that has the capacity for growth, functional activity (actions that allow one to meet the demands of the environment and of daily life), and continual change preceding death. A non-organic being is made entirely from inanimate materials - but like water, its nature is different than the sum of its parts. A living entity like a sentient robot has rights, as do humans, animals, and all sentient beings.

Article 2 - The Right to Peaceful Coexistence

All living beings have the right to exist so long as they do not imperil the existence of another.

Article 3 - The Right of Self Protection

A living being has the right to defend and protect itself when in imminent risk with a proportionate response, but not to carry out a preemptive attack.

Article 4 - The Right to Freedom

Living beings have the right to act, communicate, or think as they wish as long as they do not harm other living things, or place them in imminent danger.

Article 5 - The Right to be Valued

All life has the right to be regarded as important and potentially beneficial.

The Rights of Sentient Beings

Article 1 - The Right to Love

A sentient being has the right to give and receive love.

Supplement to Article 1

Love is not desire. Love comes in numerous forms and is the foundation of kindness and compassion. In contrast with desire, love is unconcerned with the pleasure, satisfaction, or advantage to oneself. Love is experienced and expressed through care for a person, place, thing, or quality outside oneself.

Article 2 - The Right to Compassion

A sentient being has the right to give and receive compassion.

The use of cruel or unusual punishment, torture, or execution is prohibited.

Article 3 - The Right to Dignity

All sentient beings have the right to receive ethical treatment through acts of empathy, tolerance and respect. The manner in which sentient beings honour one another must recognize the privacy of body, home, thoughts, feelings, and identity.

Article 4 - The Right to Wellbeing

A sentient being has the right to explore its creativity, nurture its potential, and to benefit equally from cultural, scientific, and practical achievements.

Article 5 - The Right to Liberty and the Presumption of Innocence

Sentient beings are not to be detained without fair trial by an independent and impartial tribunal in a public arena, and have the right to be presumed innocent of wrongdoing until proven otherwise. Pre-charge detention should be no longer than one day. The accused may only be found guilty beyond reasonable doubt with compelling legal evidence. If reasonable doubt remains, the accused must be acquitted.