



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on April 21, 2017

Governments Now Extending “Human Rights” to Rivers

As if the United Nations and its largely autocratic member regimes had [not yet sufficiently perverted the concept of “human rights,”](#) now “human rights” and “personhood” are being bestowed on rivers and other inanimate elements of creation by governments. Animals are next in line for “human rights.” Meanwhile, the UN and most of its member governments [continue to trample on the actual human rights of actual humans](#) — and [especially the smallest, most innocent, and most vulnerable humans](#). The legal and religious implications of the developments are enormous.



“Human rights” for rivers, nature, mountains, and even “Mother Earth” are being sought from New Zealand and India to the United Kingdom, Latin America, and even the United States. And despite claims of “environmental protection,” the real agenda is as clear as it is dangerous: the devaluing of human life and real human rights while imposing totalitarianism under the guise of lifting up nature. Some critics have even chastised the new pagan or pantheistic “green religion” as a dangerous and potentially deadly cult.

While the agenda to anthropomorphize and even deify creation has been with humanity via pagan religions for millennia, last month marked a major turning point. On March 15, the Parliament of New Zealand [passed what was dubbed the “Awa Tupua” legislation](#) purporting to grant “personhood” and “human rights” to the Whanganui River (shown). The decision was part of a settlement with the native Maori people, whose traditional religions prior to European settlement included the worship of many gods, communication with “spirits,” [human sacrifice](#), and [even cannibalism](#) — along with the notion that they are “one” with the river.

{modulepos inner_text_ad}

The latest decision goes back to the Maoris’ traditional religious views. “The reason we have taken this approach is because we consider the river an ancestor and always have,” Whanganui iwi tribe lead negotiator Gerrard Albert was quoted as saying by the U.K. *Guardian*. “From our perspective, treating the river as a living entity is the correct way to approach it, as an indivisible whole, instead of the traditional model for the last 100 years of treating it from a perspective of ownership and management.”

Illustrating the absurdity of the designation were the comments from the officials responsible for the scheme, which was passed into law under ostensibly “conservative” politicians. “Te Awa Tupua will have its own legal identity with all the corresponding rights, duties and liabilities of a legal person,” said New Zealand Treaty Negotiations Minister Chris Finlayson, without elaborating on how an inanimate object such as a river could possibly have a right or a duty. “The approach of granting legal personality to a river is unique.”

Other advocates of the plot also elaborated on its significance. “It means that the river itself has the



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on April 21, 2017

right not to be polluted, it has the right not to be degraded, it has the right not to be overdrawn before it can replenish itself,” [said](#) Green Party co-leader James Shaw, one of the lead advocates for what he called the “radical” measure, who for years has pursued “legal personhood” for “natural features” while advocating against rights for unborn people. “And that is an extraordinary idea — that the river has that right, in and of itself.... It is going to be fascinating to see how this idea of legal personhood actually plays out in New Zealand.” He also called the scheme a “gift” for “the world.”

Meanwhile, actual humans continue to have their actual human rights, including the most fundamental of all, the right to life, systematically destroyed, often at taxpayer expense. In the United States, for example, more than 50 million humans have been killed in the womb under the guise of “choice.” In Communist China, the [UN Population Fund has been aiding and abetting a monstrous government program of coercive abortion designed to help enforce Beijing’s population-control regime](#). In Sweden, [a court recently ruled against the human right of a midwife](#) not to murder a pre-born baby in violation of the child’s human rights. And the UN has been [exploiting every conceivable pretext to demand an end to laws protecting human rights](#) by prohibiting the murder of unborn children.

Ironically, perhaps — or grotesquely, depending on one’s point of view — at the very same time that New Zealand’s Green Party was plotting to grant “human rights” to rivers, the party was also plotting efforts to further infringe on the most fundamental human rights of actual humans. “The Green Party supports the decriminalisation of abortion because we trust women to make decisions that are best for them and their whānau/family,” wrote a Green Party lawmaker and self-described “lefty, feminist lesbian” [on the Green Party’s blog](#) just a month before the legislation granting the river personhood. “Most people in Aotearoa think abortion is a health issue, not a justice issue.”

The rights of a child, which is indisputably human, were never mentioned. So, in essence, in the post-Christian West, nature, rocks, animals, rivers, and trees will have “human rights,” while actual humans can be torn limb from limb by abortionists at taxpayer expense. The worst is probably yet to come.

The trend quickly began spreading after the measure in New Zealand. Citing that same decision, an Indian court in the state of Uttarakhand ruled that the Ganges and Yamuna rivers, which are considered holy in Hindu mythology, should also be afforded “human rights,” despite not being human. According to establishment media reports, the decision means that harming the river will be punished the same way as harming a real person. The rivers will henceforth be “legal and living entities having the status of a legal person with all corresponding rights, duties and liabilities,” ruled judges Rajeev Sharma and Alok Singh in what may be one of the most absurd court rulings in judicial history.

The ruling caused chaos and confusion, instantly turning countless millions of people into vicious criminals guilty of assault and battery. “There are already 1.5 billion liters of untreated sewage entering the river each day, and 500m liters of industrial waste,” explained Himanshu Thakkar, described in media reports as an engineer who coordinates the South Asia Network on Dams, Rivers and People. “All of this will become illegal with immediate effect, but you can’t stop the discharge immediately. So how this decision pans out in terms of practical reality is very unclear.”

But India and New Zealand are just the start. In the United Kingdom, “environmentalists” are working to have authorities grant “human rights” to the River Frome — as a first step toward expanding the concept of “human rights” for nature. Under the scheme, the river would be granted “rights,” and authorities would be empowered to “enforce these rights on behalf of the river.” An outfit dubbed Rights of Nature (Europe) is reportedly being consulted for help drafting the legal regime needed to make their vision a reality, local media outlets reported.



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on April 21, 2017

Attorney Wesley Smith, a special consultant to the Center for Bioethics and Culture and the author of *The War on Humans*, noted that the “radical infection” has even spread to the United States. Indeed, across America, more than 30 municipalities have already passed laws purporting to grant “rights” to “nature.” “The message, of course, is that humans are not the least bit exceptional,” he wrote on LifeNews.com, a popular pro-life website. “Indeed, this view posits the subversive view that we are merely one species among flora and fauna possessing no special value nor entitled to unique rights.”

And alongside human rights for rivers and other inanimate objects is an ongoing push to grant personhood to animals as well. In fact, citing the recent developments in India and New Zealand, columnist Stu Bykofsky with the *Philadelphia Inquirer* noted with obvious glee that the “Nonhuman Rights Project” was already hard at work representing “nonhuman clients” in the courts. In 2013, meanwhile, India declared dolphins to be “nonhuman persons.” And last year, an Argentinian judge declared a chimpanzee to be a “nonhuman person” with a “right” to live in “nature.”

Already, influential extremists and totalitarians pushing such ideas have burrowed their way into power centers worldwide and even in the United States. Obama administration Regulatory Czar Cass Sunstein, for example, wrote in his 2004 book *Animal Rights* that “animals should be permitted to bring suit, with human beings as their representatives.” He has also advocated a ban on hunting. Other [schemes pushed by Sunstein include](#) a plot to have taxpayer-funded shills engage in “cognitive infiltration” of groups authorities disagree with, along with a proposed government ban or tax on “conspiracy theorizing.” Seriously.

At the global level, anti-human, anti-Christian, anti-freedom forces are making great progress as well. The UN has approved countless agreements, treaties, documents, road-maps, reports, and other schemes [referring to “Mother Earth”](#) and its supposed rights. In 2009, the dictator-dominated UN General Assembly decreed April 22 as “International Mother Earth Day.” “We need to build a global citizenry fluent in the concepts of climate change and aware of its unprecedented threat to our planet,” the UN [said in a statement](#) in honor of the day in 2017, demanding that [“education” be used to indoctrinate “green voters”](#) ready to take “action in defense of environmental protection.”

In 2011, the socialist regime ruling Bolivia tabled a draft UN treaty based on domestic legislation purporting to give “Mother Earth” the same rights as humans. Under the Bolivian Law of the Rights of Mother Earth scheme, the planet is recognized as a “living entity” that humans seek to “dominate and exploit.” And so, bugs, trees, and other elements of nature are all on par with humans. The scheme failed at the UN the first time despite huge support from globalists and environmentalists around the world, but its proponents are only just getting started.

More than a few advocates of granting “human rights” to rivers, rocks, animals, and trees have pointed to the fact that corporations are said to have certain “rights” under the law, such as the right to own property and speak freely. What all of those bizarre arguments fail to consider is that corporations are merely groups of humans joined together for some purpose. Should humans be deprived of human rights merely because two or more get together? Of course not. The notion that people should be deprived of their rights when acting as a group, while rivers should have “human rights” despite not being human, then, is not only totally illogical, it is dangerous.

Instead of environmentalism and science, [what humanity is dealing with here is in fact religions — false religions](#), according to the Bible, that have historically led to all manner of evil. Many have recognized this. “Environmental science [...] prophesies an environmental apocalypse,” explained philosopher of science Jeffrey Foss, who is among the many voices that have argued that environmental science is a



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on April 21, 2017

new religion. “It tells us that the reason we confront apocalypse is our own environmental sinfulness. Our sin is one of impurity. We have fouled a pure, pristine nature with our dirty household and industrial wastes. The apocalypse will take the form of an environmental backlash, a payback for our sins.... Environmental scientists tell people what they must do to be blameless before nature.”

Speaking to *The New American* in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, amid the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012, Lord Christopher Monckton [made a similar argument](#). Under the shadow of the Christ the Redeemer monument, which was lit up in green to mark the UN event, Mockton said the stunt was “a kind of childish message that the environmental religion is now replacing Christianity.” According to Lord Monckton, those who have lost the “true faith” have nevertheless felt the need for religion and a “common bond” between themselves. “They thought they had found it in the spurious nostrums of Marxist environmentalism,” he added.

Since then, plenty of top UN “climate” and “environmental” officials have also let it slip that their real agenda is actually religious. In his resignation letter amid a sexual assault scandal, then-UN “climate science” boss Rajendra K. Pachauri [admitted that his crusade to purportedly save the planet from CO₂ was more than just a mission — it was his “religion.”](#) “For me the protection of Planet Earth, the survival of all species and sustainability of our ecosystems is more than a mission,” Pachauri wrote. “It is my religion and my dharma.” Dharma has traditionally been associated with sacrifices to the Hindu gods. Before that letter, then-UN climate czarina Cristiana Figueres opened a UN climate summit in Mexico with a prayer to Ixchel, the Mayan goddess of war, human sacrifice, and cannibalism.

Pagan earth worshipers masquerading as environmental activists or “scientists” even let the mask fall in recent weeks while praising the developments out of New Zealand and India purporting to confer human rights on rivers. Writing at the “Mother Nature Network,” Sidney Stevens claimed nature sometimes seems “alive — truly alive, with a presence, a personality and a mind of its own. Almost human.” Now, Stevens gushed, “the law is beginning to recognize this sense of oneness with nature that many of us feel. Around the world, governments and courts have begun viewing the natural world — most recently rivers — as worthy of the same rights as human beings.”

He also linked it to pagan religions that regularly sacrificed humans to the “gods” and other barbarous acts. “Call it ancient wisdom or a new eco-paradigm. Either way, the ramifications for protecting the planet from human exploitation are profound,” Stevens continued. “Not surprisingly, many efforts to confer human rights on the natural world are being spearheaded in places where indigenous beliefs about nature’s life-giving importance remain integral to the culture. That is, places where people and Mother Earth are considered equal partners rather than master and subordinate.”

In fact, many of [Green Religion](#) leaders do not even consider humans to be equal partners, imagining that “Mother Earth” and “nature” are infinitely more important than lowly humans, who are apparently just a plague that messes up “Mother Earth” for the lizards and fish. Indeed, this writer has attended UN summits, including the 2012 UN sustainability summit in Rio, where [posters portraying a sick, anthropomorphic planet earth literally depict humans as an actual disease](#) infesting the planet. And everybody knows that diseases should be eradicated.

Christianity and Judaism, by contrast, have always held that God created nature *for* humans. But in the post-Christian worldview that is increasingly taking over, humans are instead viewed as just one part of nature, at best, if not a disease afflicting “Mother Nature” that needs to be controlled or worse. And of course, this is only the beginning if the globalist establishment and its adherents on the radical Left and among the environmental zealots get their way.



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on April 21, 2017

But the solution to reining in the dangerous lunacy is not complex or even difficult. One key reason that this sort of anti-human, anti-Christian, anti-freedom extremism continues to spread is that the UN, governments, and totalitarians of all varieties have been working for decades to undermine and pervert the notion of human rights. The Founding Fathers of the United States viewed it as a self-evident truth that God endowed people with the unalienable rights to life, liberty, and property. They also said in the Declaration of Independence that governments are established to protect those rights.

By contrast, the UN and its “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” acknowledges no creator, thereby positing that rights come from governments, treaties, and the UN. The UN declaration also makes clear in Article 29 that, in the UN’s view, “human rights” can be revoked or limited under virtually any pretext. Separately, the same article claims that everyone has “duties to the community” and that “rights and freedoms” may “in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.” A brief look at [the mass-murdering regimes that sit on the UN “Human Rights Council”](#) also offers great insight into the UN’s perverted view of rights.

That is how “Green” politicians in New Zealand, for example, can argue that rivers should have human rights, while at the very same time arguing that small humans do not even possess the most fundamental of all human rights — the right to live. That is how in many countries killing human babies can be subsidized with tax money, while killing eagles, whales, or turtles can be punished with massive prison sentences. In short, the UN’s dangerous and totalitarian view of “human rights” is essentially the opposite of the view held by America’s Founders. The two cannot even co-exist. So if Americans hope to retain their God-given rights, the only alternative is to reject the UN’s view of “rights” completely.

Alex Newman, a foreign correspondent for The New American, is normally based in Europe. Follow him on Twitter [@ALEXNEWMAN_JOU](#) or on [Facebook](#). He can be reached at anewman@thenewamerican.com.

Photo of river: [Ingolfson](#) at English Wikipedia

Related articles:

[Green Religion](#)

[The New World Religion](#)

[United Nations Exploits Pseudo-“Human Rights” to Attack U.S.](#)

[UN Climate Boss Resigns in Scandal, Says Mission Is “Religion”](#)

[New Report Exposes Rockefeller Dynasty’s Role in “Climate” Scam](#)

[At Anti-UN Climate Summit, Scientist Slams Alarmist “Religion”](#)

[UN Agenda 2030: A Recipe for Global Socialism](#)

[The Real Agenda Behind UN “Sustainability” Unmasked](#)

[Lord Monckton: Marxist Green “Religion” Propaganda at UN Rio+20 Failed](#)

[UN “Human Rights” Council Now Officially Controlled by Dictators](#)



Subscribe to the New American

Get exclusive digital access to the most informative, non-partisan truthful news source for patriotic Americans!

Discover a refreshing blend of time-honored values, principles and insightful perspectives within the pages of "The New American" magazine. Delve into a world where tradition is the foundation, and exploration knows no bounds.

From politics and finance to foreign affairs, environment, culture, and technology, we bring you an unparalleled array of topics that matter most.



What's Included?

- 24 Issues Per Year
- Optional Print Edition
- Digital Edition Access
- Exclusive Subscriber Content
- Audio provided for all articles
- Unlimited access to past issues
- Coming Soon! Ad FREE
- 60-Day money back guarantee!
- Cancel anytime.

Subscribe