



PRESS RELEASE

First audience of the Tribunal in Defence of Aquatic Ecosystems: Rights for la Mer de Glace !

The first hearing of the European Tribunal for Aquatic Ecosystems will take place on January 30th 2021 at 5 pm. To inaugurate this citizen tribunal organised by the European Network of the Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature (GARN)¹, Notre Affaire à Tous will defend the [Mer de Glace case](#), alongside the Mountain Wilderness association. During the pleading, the need to respect the rights of the glacier will be demonstrated.

The climate crisis threatens the existence of France's largest glacier and inaction will cause its volume to decrease by 90% by the end of the century. However, the simple application of the greenhouse gas reduction measures of the Paris Agreement would allow the conservation of more than 60% of the glacier's current volume. The Mer de Glace must be defended in order to guarantee its survival. This is why GARN Europe is opening its Tribunal by presenting this emblematic case.

Law as a tool for the protection of endangered ecosystems

There is still time to act. From January to May 2021, the Tribunal for the Rights of Nature will study five cases of aquatic entities to be protected in Europe: the Mer de Glace France, the rivers of French Guiana, Lake Vättern in Sweden, the rivers of the Balkans and the Mediterranean Sea threatened by red mud in Marseille.

Recognising the rights of Nature means recognising the interdependence between humans and Nature and accepting that humans can no longer dispose of it with impunity. Thus, it is a necessity to establish the legal personality of Nature in order to systematically take it into account in our political and societal choices. This legal evolution is necessary for the preservation of life.

This Saturday 30th January, Notre Affaire à Tous is committed, in cooperation with Mountain Wilderness France, to the preservation of the Mer de Glace.

¹ GARN brings together organisations working for the recognition of the rights of nature and the application of the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth in 100 countries.



For Marine Yzquierdo, who will be acting as the lawyer representing the interests of the Mer de Glace, *“this tribunal is an opportunity to highlight the crucial role of glaciers in relation to climate change, and is part of the advocacy of Notre Affaire à Tous for climate justice and the recognition of the rights of Nature. The Mer de Glace is disappearing, its rights to exist, to maintain and regenerate its vital cycles must be recognised.”*

For Fiona Mille of Mountain Wilderness: *“Mountains play a strategic role in water management. Like great water towers, they store this vital resource in their glaciers and then supply our valleys. Water is the source of life and we must act to preserve and regenerate mountain aquatic ecosystems.”*

For Natalia Greene, co-secretary of the European Tribunal for the Rights of Aquatic Ecosystems, *“after having organised 5 International Tribunals for the Rights of Nature, this is particularly important because of the exposure of the cases and the interest in the rights of nature in Europe, so that nature can have a voice and a platform to demonstrate how to deal with nature as a subject of rights.”*

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[\(French version here\)](#)