



PRESS RELEASE

One vote and a voice for Nature on the board of directors of French companies

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A world premiere: in the United Kingdom, the beauty products company Faith in Nature announced in September 2022 that it had appointed a director to represent Nature on its board of directors. Today French NGO Notre Affaire à Tous announces its support of the Earth Law Center and Faith in Nature's initiative! Together with the Earth Law Center, Notre Affaire à Tous is launching a similar initiative in France. This is a call for participation among French companies.

Last September, Faith in Nature became the first company to appoint Nature on its board as a non-executive director, through human proxies. The company is being supported by the Earth Law Center, an NGO that advocates for the recognition of the rights of Nature in the United States, and by UK-based law firm Lawyers for Nature.

Faith in Nature's corporate documents have been amended to state that in addition to benefiting shareholders, the company will do its best to "have a positive impact on nature as a whole" and "minimize the prospect of any negative impact of its business operations on nature."

After the news was relayed by [The Guardian](#), companies worldwide have shown an interest in this initiative. In this context, Notre Affaire à Tous and the Earth Law Center have joined forces to combine their expertise and deploy a similar initiative in France. They will be supported by a coalition of leading experts in corporate law and environmentalism. This is a new perspective that could improve French business practices by integrating environmental issues into the development of corporate strategy.

Discussions are already underway with French companies to involve them in the pilot project. The modalities regarding the nomination of Nature's representative(s) and the modification of corporate documents, such as the charter and bylaws, are currently being worked out. Notre Affaire à Tous and the company or companies that will join the pilot project can count on the services of the Earth law Center and associated corporate counsel to assist with the corporate law aspects.

For Marine Yzquierdo, lawyer and advocacy coordinator at Notre Affaire à Tous, *"such a method will contribute to the implementation of a new form of corporate governance in which Nature will have a voice in the decision-making process. This will have a positive impact on corporate strategy, thereby strengthening CSR (corporate social responsibility) policies and B Corps' ambitions and commitments, whilst making directors accountable for their decisions in this regard."*

According to Alexandra Pimor, Director of European Corporate Governance at the Earth Law Center, *"the ecological transition is a systemic necessity that affects us on many fronts; the rights of Nature are not confined to legal systems, and must become an integral part of the culture of all governance systems. It is a real privilege to be one of the first human beings to represent the voice of Nature within a company. It is also a responsibility that I share with my colleague Brontie Ansell (LFN), with the assistance of a community of experts who support us in developing this role."*

This news was welcomed by Simeon Rose, creative director of Faith in Nature in the United Kingdom, who hopes that many other companies will join in appointing Nature to their boards: *"Everything we do impacts upon the natural world, yet the one voice never heard in the boardroom was that of Nature itself. Giving Nature a vote and a voice within a corporate structure recognises the rights of Nature and is a huge step towards rebalancing business' relationship with the natural world. But it only really becomes powerful when many, many companies do as we've done."*

Notre Affaire à Tous and the Earth Law Center are now launching a call for participation in France to companies, whether private or public, which would like to explore this initiative further. The actual representative of Nature as well as the duties and responsibilities of the position will be refined as the process unfolds. Interested companies should jointly contact Notre Affaire à Tous and the Earth Law Center.

This innovative method of representing nature on boards of directors also marks a new step towards the recognition of the rights of nature in Europe, which these UK and French initiatives hope to advance.

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