

Rights of Nature: Through the Looking Glass

USP Seed Grant Project (2024-2025)

Stakeholders Workshop Report

September 2025



Table of Contents

1. The Rights of Nature Seed Grant Project	3
2. The Participatory Event.....	4
3. The Results from the World Café	7
Group 1	7
Group 2	9
Group 3	10
Group 4	12
Group 5	14
Group 6	16
Group 7	18
Group 8	20
4. Reflections	23
5. Conclusions	27
Annexes.....	28
Annex 1. Event Programme	28
Annex 2. Free, Prior, Informed Consent Form	29
Annex 3. Group Notes from Collective Discussion.....	31

1. The Rights of Nature Seed Grant Project

Dear workshop participants,

The project *Rights of Nature: Through the Looking Glass* is a Seed Grant Project financed by the University of Amsterdam Sustainability Platform for the period 2024-2025. We are a transdisciplinary team of researchers from the Faculty of Law, Faculty of Science and Center for Latin American Studies in the Faculty of Humanities. The Project Team is comprised of:

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Together, we seek to understand how nature protection is often conceptualized through different perspectives. Some of these perspectives are anthropocentric, focusing on nature protection strictly for human purposes, often commodifying through financial instruments (e.g., carbon offsetting, payments for ecosystem services). Other perspectives recognize nature as intrinsically valuable, to be protected for its own sake. More relational perspectives (which have often been shaped through the lens of indigenous ontologies and socio-ecological stewardship) conceptualize humans and nature as indivisible and interdependent, and therefore, the protection of nature requires alternative ways to think about nature and rights.

Inspired in part by the latter two perspectives, the Rights of Nature have materialized in policies, practices, initiatives, and movements, mostly in the Global South. The Rights of Nature have gradually become a global movement, slowly gaining traction in European jurisdictions, including the Netherlands. This project aims to assess the development of the narratives and practices of Rights of Nature in Europe, with a particular focus on the Netherlands and Spain; and how this new perspective interplays with anthropocentric and ecocentric conceptualizations of nature which are grounded on western ontologies.

With this objective in mind, we envisioned fostering a dialogue amongst a diverse set of actors that could bring to the table different perspectives on the concept of the Rights of Nature. Partnering with the Embassy of the North Sea, we had the opportunity to collaborate with the activities of the *Confluence of European Water Bodies* in Amsterdam¹. Being part of the encounter program, the project

¹ See: <https://water-bodies.eu/confluence-of-european-water-bodies-2025-program/>

Rights of Nature: Through the Looking Glass hosted you during a participatory activity at the University of Amsterdam to foster discussion and critical reflection on the concept of Rights of Nature (see also Section 2 below).

In the present report, we present a brief description of the event, then a group-by-group summary of the discussions that took place during the event, followed by a distillation of the insights we collected throughout the process, and some brief conclusions. We also include as appendices the event program, consent form, as well as photos of the collective notes taken during the discussions.

We hope you found the discussions as fruitful as we did, and that this report can serve as a resource to build on insights from the event.

2. The Participatory Event

The participatory event took place in De Brug, Roeterseiland Campus, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, on the 24 September 2025, from 10h to 14h30. We had 68 people present, and the institutions and water bodies represented are detailed below in Table 1.

Table 1. Institutions and Water Bodies represented at the Participatory Event.

Institution/Organisation	Represented water body and/or geography
Akerselva / Os_lo	Oslo Fjord (Norway)
Free Tagliamento	River Tagliamento (Italy)
Amarme	Mar Menor (Spain)
Arts4theCommons	Ecuador
Dark Matter Lab	River Don, Sheffield
Independent	Deep Sea
Embassy of the Baltic Sea	Baltic Sea, Vättern
Embassy of the North Sea	North Sea, Dogger Bank
GARN	Mediterranean
Genova area waters	Genova Area Waters (Italy)
Groningen University (Religious Studies)	n/a
Irish Rivers	Irish Rivers
Independent	La Janda Lagoon (Spain)
Living Imaginaries	n/a
Love Our Ouse	Ouse (UK)
MaasLab + TAAT	Maas River (NL)
Maastricht University (PhD)	n/a

Massachusetts (PhD)	Atlantic
Mattauw Earth Triennial	Zengwen River (Taiwan)
MOTH	Scottish Sea Moss rewilding
Natural Contract Lab	Zenne/Senne (Belgium), Maas (NL)
Newfoundland University (PhD)	Atlantic
GARN	Mediterranean + Pek
Odra Tribe	Odra
Independent	Pek
Independent	Reuss
Independent	Rijn
Independent	Schelde
Independent	Snæfellsjökul (Iceland)
Southampton University (PhD)	n/a
Independent	Spree Berlin (Germany)
Stichting Doggerland	Doggerbank
University of Amsterdam	Waddenzee / North Sea
University of Göteborg	Vättern / Viskan
Independent	Vättern / Viskan
University of Roehampton (PhD)	Rivers of Western Europe
Venice Climate Change Pavilion	Venice
TBA21	Venice Lagoon
Independent	Wattenmeer

Our event relied on a participatory method, known as the *world café*, in which participants are divided into tables, invited to answer guiding questions and then report to the whole plenary (see Table 2). In our approach, we utilized the guiding questions as an elicitation process, intentionally designed to provoke debate, challenge each other's pre-established ideas, and therefore foster new pathways of reflection. In doing so, we aimed to invite multiple conceptualizations on the Rights of Nature, rather than favoring specific ones. In this context, the moderator role played by the project members intended to be more of a facilitating figure rather than acting as active researchers who provide answers or steer the conversation. We sought to avoid closed conclusions and instead open space for a broader agenda of dialogue, practice and action by building bridges among different institutions, geographies, water bodies, and lived experiences. We deemed it very interesting and imagined it would be very interesting to the participants as well, to discover this variety of conceptualizations. We asked questions about

challenges and strategies exchange on these issues could be especially useful to the participants who, from very diverse backgrounds, support a common or highly similar cause. Therefore, we kept the event closed; the idea was to spark conversations amongst people who have already thought about these issues for a long time.



Table 2. World Café Guiding Questions.

World Café Moments	Guiding Questions
#1: Your Water Body	<p>How do you characterize the water body with which you work? How do you delineate it? How do you connect to it?</p> <p>How would you describe the cause for your initiative and the water body?</p> <p>When would the cause for your water body be complete?</p>
# 2: The Concept of the Rights of Nature	<p>What do Rights of Nature mean to you?</p> <p>In your view, are these rights a legal issue or more of a moral issue? Or something else?</p> <p>In your view, in which cases can we say the Rights of Nature are being fully respected?</p>
# 3: Global South Perspectives	<p>Is your initiative influenced by (indigenous) perspectives from the Global South?</p> <p>How do you link these influences to the context of your water body?</p> <p>Is European indigeneity if importance to you and if so, how do you see it?</p>
# 4: Challenges and Strategies	<p>What are the main challenges are you facing in the cause for your water body?</p> <p>What kind of activities or strategies have your initiative adopted up to now? Which activities or strategies have proven to be most successful for your cause so far?</p> <p>What are the obstacles you are facing?</p>

3. The Results from the World Café

Group 1

#1. Your Waterbody

Participants reflected on the need to reimagine our relationship with water bodies through memory, emotion, and care. This meant not only thinking about Rights of Nature in the present or future, but also reconnecting with the past, with the histories. The discussion emphasized that connecting to a water body involves not only recognizing its physical or political boundaries but also acknowledging its identity and its right to exist. Participants highlighted that water bodies should be loved intrinsically, not merely for the services or benefits they provide, and that they have the right, for example, not to be polluted.

The conversation also touched on the political nature of water bodies, as they shape landscapes and human relations, raising the question of how governance could be guided by absence—by letting nature exist without constant human intervention—even though, in practice, humanity’s presence is pervasive.

A central discussion emerged around the challenge of forming tangible relationships with water bodies that seem distant from our daily lives. Participants questioned how people might empathize with a particular water body if they have no direct connection to it, suggesting that it ultimately depends on who tells the story and how that story bridges the emotional distance between humans and nature. In this sense, the cause is not only ecological or legal, but also cultural: to cultivate a collective memory and a culture of care in which water bodies are recognized as living entities deserving of love, respect, and protection.

Summary: (Collective) memory; intrinsic rights; governance guided by absence; storytelling/storytellers.

#2. The Concept of the Rights of Nature

Participants reflected on the meaning of the Rights of Nature as something that extends far beyond legal frameworks. Many emphasized that everything and everyone is interconnected, that we are all ecosystems and part of the Earth. From this perspective, granting rights to nature follows a trajectory similar to historical struggles for recognition—such as those of women and minority groups—but it also exposes the limits of Western legal and moral systems, which tend to separate humans from the natural world.

Several participants noted that current regulations and legal notions of rights are deeply Westernized, and while the term “Rights of Nature” may be easy to explain within European frameworks, it risks overlooking other worldviews and forms of relation. Some questioned the concept itself, arguing that the word “right” is a loaded term—rooted in human political and moral traditions—and wondered what

it truly means to speak of “rights” in relation to non-human entities. This led to a broader reflection on language, inclusion, and meaning, particularly when considering how these ideas resonate with or differ from indigenous understandings of the world. Others suggested that instead of speaking of Rights of Nature, we should move beyond human-centered language and think in terms of “ecologies of agency” or “community of agencies,” which recognize multiple forms of life. Participants agreed that law is a materialization of morality, but that a new and more inclusive consciousness is needed—one that emerges through the co-existence of diverse voices. They highlighted the importance of meeting people where they are, not where we want them to be, as a way of fostering shared understanding rather than imposing concepts. Ultimately, participants agreed that there is no case in which the Rights of Nature are fully respected, as our current systems and worldviews remain deeply anthropocentric.

Summary: Struggles for recognition; ecologies of agency; fostering shared understanding rather than imposing concepts.

#3. Global South Perspectives

When discussing Indigenous influences from the Global South, several participants cautioned against treating these perspectives as ready-made solutions or as a small group tasked with solving global problems. They noted that the term “*Indigenous*” itself is loaded, often associated with patriotism or cultural essentialism, and that it risks romanticization. Participants also reflected on how Europe has colonized itself, losing many of its local cultures and relations to the land, and that it must confront this historical trauma. They pointed out that constructed ways of living, shaped for example by agrarian policies, continue to influence how people relate to nature today. Participants emphasized that there are different degrees and forms of connection, and that all people are capable of recognizing environmental issues and needs through their own intrinsic understanding. The discussion also distinguished between Indigenous knowledge and local knowledge, suggesting that the goal should not be to reproduce one or the other, but to learn reciprocally and acknowledge that each carries valuable insights. In linking these reflections to the context of the water body, some initiatives sought to foster dialogue across perspectives, recognizing that every community holds its own forms of wisdom, memory, and relationship with nature, all of which are essential for reimagining a more inclusive and grounded understanding of the Rights of Nature.

Summary: local knowledge; reciprocal learning; fostering dialogue across perspectives.

#4. Challenges and Strategies

Participants stated that the topic of Rights of Nature is inherently vulnerable, as much of the work surrounding it remains voluntary and underfunded, with greater support directed toward academic research than toward advocacy or practical implementation. Participants highlighted that one of the main challenges in defending water bodies lies in the political sphere, where decision-making often

constrains or limits the impact of diverse groups, which include, for example, scientists, lawyers, and activists. Despite this diversity, participants acknowledged that it is still difficult to confront political boundaries or achieve systemic change. Many questions remain unresolved, particularly around how to speak with and for nature, how to shift from an *ego*-centric to an *eco*-centric perspective, and how to account for the needs of future generations. Grassroots movements sometimes operate without a singular goal, focusing instead on representing and defending water bodies in their various social and ecological contexts. Participants noted that in some countries, additional obstacles such as xenophobia make the inclusion of external knowledge or expertise more difficult. They identified three interacting dimensions of struggle and change: institutional, methodological, and personal/social. All of which must be addressed simultaneously. Strategies adopted include workshops, intergenerational dialogues, and educational talks aimed at younger generations, as older generations may face entrenched habits or understandings that are difficult to unlearn. The most successful strategies are those that combine practical advocacy with cultural and educational engagement.

Summary: How do we speak with/for nature?; Shifting from egocentrism to ecocentrism; institutional, methodological, and personal/social struggles.

Group 2

#1. Your Waterbody

Participants agreed on the fluidity of their water body. Whereas some of them started, a few years back, to see it as a well-defined ‘body’, they have become increasingly aware of it being a watershed that extends into many other water bodies and transcends boundaries that are usually drawn on maps. Rivers change course; water is always flowing. From an interspecies perspective, the boundaries we draw on maps are irrelevant. To connect to the water bodies, sensorial methods – feeling, smelling, touching, swimming – were mentioned. Several participants agreed that the cause for their water body would not be complete, ever. Rather, once a political voice for, or rights of the waterbody would be institutionalized, the real work would only be starting.

Summary: Fluidity of boundaries; sensory methods; political voice for water; every continuous work.

#2. The Concept of the Rights of Nature

“Rights of nature are kind of lame”, one participant said laughingly - “it is so obvious that living creatures have a right to live”. Everyone at the table seemed to agree that codification of the Rights of Nature is not an end in itself. Rather, Rights of Nature were seen as practical tool to be used for various purposes:

- A tool **to invite conversations** about a necessary paradigm shift;
- A tool **to institutionalize** a different world view;

- A **mobilization tool** since the concept is intuitively easy to understand;
- A **tool for knowledge making**, opening up spaces for more embodied and localized knowledge;
- A **tool to connect to humans**, as the Rights of Nature ultimately guide what people should do and not do.

Summary: Tool; institutionalization; mobilization; knowledge making; connection.

#3 Global South Perspectives

Participants mainly reflected on the concept of European Indigeneity. Whereas for some, this was a term meaning that humans in Europe would again connect with nature, to go back to a time where people from Europe had closer ties to other life, others disliked the concept as Indigeneity is a word used specifically used for colonial contexts. Participants agreed that decolonization is a key goal for the movement, that practices and local knowledge should be central. As an inspirational example, someone mentioned the practice of Taiwanese indigenous peoples replacing their home to respect the changed course of the river.

Summary: Decolonization; local knowledge and practices.

#4 Challenges and Strategies

Various participants agreed that using art is a success strategy for this movement. Holding a performance like a moot court of a parliament of things makes it easy for government officials and representatives of corporate players to get acquainted with new, paradigmatically very different ideas, without having to commit to them. Art is a free space.

The work needed to build community support and grassroots movements was mentioned as a challenge. When working together with established NGO's, it is hard not to maintain the status quo that you want to challenge.

Summary: Art as free space; workload of building grassroots movements. paradox of challenging the status quo through established organisations.

Group 3

#1. Your Waterbody

The discussion focused on three main aspects: First, the diversity of socioecological contexts was highlighted—ranging from highly urbanized environments to more remote ones. This diversity also extended to the physical state of water: liquid in rivers and lagoons, solid in glaciers. Considering this diversity, the term water mass was considered more appropriate than water body, as the latter tends to promote an anthropocentric and compartmentalized view of waterscapes.

Second, the discussion addressed the issue of scale, with examples spanning from the local to transnational systems. The concept of the “Aquacene” emerged as a proposed cultural shift toward coexistence with water, offering an alternative to traditional models of control and domination. The role of transnational networks, such as the Confluence, was emphasized for their ability to foster mutual support and collective knowledge-building. Finally, the importance of multispecies relationships, cultural belonging, and sensorial connections to water—through breathing, tasting, seeing, and feeling—were underscored as essential to the protection and care of these waterscapes.

Summary: Water mass; Aquacene; transnational networks; mutual support and collective knowledge building; multispecies relationships; cultural belonging.

#2. The Concept of the Rights of Nature

The group held contrasting positions on the concept of Rights of Nature, highlighting the need for cautious application of this Southern perspective in the Global North. On one hand, the framework fosters transdisciplinarity and provides a shared language to communicate complex relationships with nature to the wider public. Given the existing legal instruments protecting businesses and heritage, there seems little justification for leaving nature without similar protection. On the other hand, Rights of Nature could open the door to practices of green grabbing and nature policing under the guise of protection. Another critique pointed to the tension between nature’s integrated character and the human-made legal system, which inherently separates humans from nature. A further concern was the emphasis on "nature" rather than "life," as the latter avoids narrow or instrumental conceptualizations. The group questioned whether Rights of Nature should be considered a "necessary ill," noting its usefulness as a tool for activists. Ultimately, they agreed that recognition of nature’s intrinsic value must go hand in hand with community empowerment to prevent misuse of the concept.

Summary: transdisciplinarity; shared language; green grabbing and nature policing; human-made legal system; Rights of Nature versus rights to life; instrumental conceptualization of nature; community empowerment.

#3. Global South Perspectives

Like in the previous discussion, the group expressed contrasting views Global South . For some, particularly those with experience working in the Global South, the concept resonates strongly. They emphasized the principles of rootedness and identity grounded in nature, and contrasted these with Western cultures that often are disconnected from nature. Others, however, viewed the "Global South perspective" as largely an academic construction. From this standpoint, it makes Indigenous perspectives irrelevant in Western contexts while simultaneously overlooking Indigenous roots that still exist within Europe. These roots, expressed through memory, practices and belief systems, point to enduring connections with nature—connections that may serve as a bridge across cultures, spaces, and

times. Some argued that instead of framing struggles through an Indigenous lens, it may be more productive to focus on place-based perspective. Such an approach allows for recognizing the porous boundaries between Western and Indigenous ways of thinking and valuing nature.

Summary: rootedness; Global South as an academic construction; place-based perspectives; porous boundaries between indigenous and Western valuations of nature.

#4. Challenges and Strategies

This broad question led to two main points for discussion: the material dimension of action and the emotional dimension. On the material side, building transnational networks such as the Confluence and developing new narratives strong enough to challenge dominant ones were seen as essential. Another material concern is fundraising, which remains vital for the continuity of any movement or network. On the emotional side, sensorial approaches that enable people to feel connected to water bodies and to make decisions in relation to them. Equally important is to establish systems of care, safeguards, and solidarity to counter apathy and pessimism. This dimension is particularly relevant for engaging younger generations, who are increasingly disconnected from collective action. Overall, the group agreed that cultivating hope is indispensable for sustaining these struggles over time.

Summary: Material and emotional dimensions of action; transnational networks and developing new narratives; systems of care.

Group 4

#1. Your Waterbody

The first main theme of the discussion was about personal relationships with nature. Some participants were born and raised with their water bodies, while others came to them later, e.g., through a transformative encounter. But the importance of building/restoring/reinventing broken personal relationships with water and better attuning to nature (e.g., through sound, movement, and broader sensorial engagement, while conceptually reframing such relationships) was crucial. This relates to another central throughline from the discussion about time, emotion, and interconnection/complex entanglements. Participants reflected on how situating changes through time can serve as a force for recognizing cyclicity, unity or interconnection (e.g., across deep time and between systems when glacial meltwater becomes the rain, river, lake, or sea elsewhere to protect) without necessarily evoking grief. Other participants highlighted that moments of disruption/ecological degradation can be moments of trauma, devastation, or suffering (that can also be used for reshaping cultural narratives). The group didn't focus on when the cause would be complete. While one participant suggested it would be when all rights are protected, the general sense seemed to be that there was no endpoint, as relationships and forms of representation are cyclical and ongoing.

Summary: Personal relationships; emotions; cycles; protection of rights.

#2. The Concept of the Rights of Nature

The discussion surfaced the complexity and contestation around different meanings of (as well as visions and risks of) Rights of Nature. A central point of discussion revolved around the relation with human rights, with participants wanting to reject the separation (HRs are part of RoN), but at the same time expressing concern about the prospects of integrating nature into the Western, colonial, imperialistic system of rights (both at the ontological level of how we conceive of nature, and the practical level of protection/enforcement/fairly claiming on nature's behalf given our track record). Others directed the discussion more towards the notion of representation and thinking about the Rights of Nature as a perennial negotiation/conversation with nature. Participants also entertained the possibility that Rights of Nature are best conceived as a “pragmatic tool”, or perhaps centrally about an “epistemic shift”, or perhaps best understood as “an invitation”, or a “possibility of hope”.

Summary: Human rights; Western imperialistic system; representation; conversation with nature; possibility of hope.

#3. Global South Perspectives

This discussion began with some participants tracing their direct influences (e.g., from the Mapuche people and the Whanganui case), including reflections on how that led them to focus on their “own backyard”. The broader discussion reflected a concern that the term “indigenous” is overused and romanticized or essentialized, and there is a real danger of just “taking what we want” without due care or respect. There was a shared resistance to placing too much emphasis on indigeneity and instead focusing more on local, traditional, experiential/embodied ecological knowledge. It is important to root Rights of Nature movements to the people working/living with nature and their culture, traditions, and ancestors, but that doesn't need to be indigenous (which is a politically loaded term with complicated relationships to oppression). Moreover, we shouldn't forget the diversity of Indigenous cultures/traditions/identities (e.g., not only in the Global South, not only connected to localized territory, not only those that are formally/institutionally recognized, etc.), nor the ways in which indigenous bodies are used/exploited for conflict and extractivism.

Summary: Romanticization; local knowledge; oppression; diversity; conflict.

#4. Challenges and Strategies

The discussion focused mostly on challenges/obstacles, where a number of interlinking themes came up. Familiar concerns such as lack of money and time, and the difficulty of cross-border coordination were raised. Another set of challenges related to organizing and building community support, where participants pointed out significant fragmentation or lack of unity, and noticed the effects of personal

issues between activists/groups or being dependent on particular people/relationships to build alliances. The discussion also raised questions about the uncomfortable dependence on technology and social media (given the problematic power/role of the platforms and their role in alienating us from nature), and about the possible benefits and drawbacks of more provocative action. A number of further challenges were also raised in relation to the lack of support, or open hostility, from the government or people in power (including concerns about corruption, bribes, lobbying, and criminalizing environmental groups/activism, but also, for example, the “unquestionable” status/authority of water knowledge/management practices in the NL). While little time was spent discussing strategies, of note was the importance of experimentation and tapping into emotional experiences/connections.

Summary: Lack of resources and support; cross-border coordination; community support; dependence; emotional connections.

Group 5

#1. Your Waterbody

The discussion began with reflections on the concept of the watershed, understood as a natural boundary that defines bodies of water. Participants noted that these boundaries are not only physical but also shaped through the stories, identities, and practices of local communities. Others challenged the notion of man-made borders altogether, instead emphasizing ecosystems as living networks of interconnected waters and beings. Examples such as the Dogger Bank were used to illustrate how artificial boundaries can obscure ecological relationships. When reflecting on the motivations behind environmental advocacy, participants emphasized principles of fairness, accountability, and accessibility. Water was described as a shared resource that should remain equitable and life-sustaining for all. Several participants spoke about countering threats posed by human activity, while others proposed viewing water as a vital actor in the web of life—essential to the beginnings and continuities of existence—and advocated for recognizing its legal rights to ensure protection.

A common discomfort emerged around the question: “When would the cause for your waterbody be complete?” Many participants felt that the idea of completion did not apply, as the value of a “successful cause” is difficult to define. Some reflected that viewing their efforts as a fixed, finite objective risks overlooking the ongoing and relational nature of change. Others noted that becoming guardians of nature and striving for a more just and balanced world is a continual process, sustained through education and collective commitment. While legal representation of living entities was recognized as crucial, it was not necessarily viewed as the ultimate goal.

Summary: Watershed; local identities; networks; fairness; equity; education; collective commitment; legal representation.

#2. The Concept of the Rights of Nature

Participants framed the Rights of Nature as a central principle within their environmental thinking. It was described as a paradigm shift away from anthropocentrism and toward a recognition of interdependence among all living systems. Several participants emphasized that Rights of Nature should be seen not as a fixed legal framework but as an evolving process that aligns with decolonial and ecological perspectives, challenging the assumed separation between humans and nature.

Others viewed these rights as a tool for positive transformation but warned of their potential misuse when representation is co-opted by actors misaligned with ecological justice. This highlighted the importance of advocating for the well-being of the entire living community rather than focusing narrowly on individual ecosystems. Participants also discussed how the concept of Rights of Nature introduces provocative and unfamiliar ideas, often inviting reflection on deeply ingrained assumptions. It was noted that these ideas can be seen as translations of Indigenous worldviews, though certain dimensions may be lost in that translation. Participants also stressed the need for frameworks that move beyond legal strategies alone, incorporating approaches such as degrowth and restorative justice.

Summary: Paradigm shift; decolonial and ecological perspectives; positive transformation; restorative justice.

#3. Global South Perspectives

Participants reflected on how diverse cultural attachments to bodies of water shape environmental relations and responses. Some described practices and rituals that nurture a sense of reciprocity and belonging, rooted in local histories and mythologies that strengthen mutual connection among people and with nature. Others highlighted the importance of collective guardianship, drawing inspiration from Indigenous struggles for recognition and emphasizing legal representation as one possible avenue for protection.

However, several participants also questioned Eurocentric perspectives on these issues, arguing for the need to rethink ownership and acknowledge the interconnectedness of all living beings. The conversation addressed the complexities of defining indigeneity in the European context—raising questions about who determines such identities and how. Participants warned of the risks posed by exclusionary movements that claim indigeneity for nationalist purposes. Across the discussion, rituals—particularly those involving grief—were identified as meaningful practices for expressing loss and fostering renewed relationships with the environment. These practices were understood not as appropriations of other traditions but as context-specific forms of cultural creation and care.

Summary: Diversity; nurture; collective guardianship; recognition; Eurocentric perspectives; interconnectedness; grief.

#4. Challenges and Strategies

Much of the discussion focused on the challenges participants encounter in their environmental work. These included material and organizational obstacles within collectives, as well as physical and ecological issues such as pollution and the lingering presence of harmful remnants in marine environments. Participants described the difficulties of confronting powerful economic and political actors and acknowledged the complexity of influencing governance structures.

Strategies discussed included fostering community connections, counteracting human isolation, and nurturing shared responsibility for environmental stewardship. The role of emotions was emphasized as central to both individual and collective engagement. Alliances and collaborative efforts were regarded as essential for effective advocacy. Education emerged as a recurring theme—seen as vital for cultivating awareness, imagination, and long-term commitment. Storytelling was highlighted as a key method for preserving memory, envisioning alternative futures, and strengthening emotional bonds that motivate collective action.

Summary: Ecological issues; political and economic actors; governance structures; community connections; emotions; education.

Group 6

#1. Your Waterbody

The discussion started off by addressing the differences in the water bodies represented at the table. One example described the North Sea as a “working sea”, an ecological yet also economic space given its extensive use for economic purposes. Another case portrayed the Snaefellsjökull in Iceland as amorphous and flirtatious, evoking emotional resonance and fostering spiritual restoration. The Oslo Fjord was characterized as small, enlivened and electric – a body of water that is slowly dying, yet provides an opportunity for awakening. The Baltic Sea was described as sublime, a place with strong spiritual connection, encompassing different ecosystems and relations while being shaped by transportation, resources extraction, tourism and local groups. In Poland, the Odra river was envisioned as “an old woman with working hands”, a water body with purpose and a long-standing history as a geographic boundary. Lastly, the Wen river was discussed as a common thread uniting different populations in a very large area. It can “re-bind” the boundaries, and ultimately represent every single being. Achieving such unity, however, was understood to require strong relational commitments across the large watershed.

Summary: Deep connection; yet different perceptions.

#2. The Concept of the Rights of Nature

Rights of Nature are seen by the group as an open-ended, yet closer description of the real, which moreover could lead to a shift of the system towards oneness with nature. The discussion then quickly focused on dissecting the concept of “legal personhood” into its analytical elements, namely “legal” and “personhood”. The shared opinion is that, in general, the main focus in the Rights of Nature discourse lies on the legal side, whereas less of the focus is given to the idea of personhood. Whereas personhood embodies a relation, an imagination of nature, which should come first and before any legal articulation. In other words, the relational (even before the moral) aspects of nature. Yet at the same time the legal part is necessary, especially regarding large areas subject to ecological threats. Rights of Nature thus unravel the power of law as fiction and abstraction, thus fostering imagination towards equality and de-hierarchization. Rights of Nature are also perceived as reframing. The concept evokes different languages, different approaches, and ultimately it subverts anthropocentric legal frameworks. Yet do Rights of Nature immediately become anthropocentric the moment they are framed in the law? Yes, but it was suggested that this process might still be valuable – to “fake it as we make it” - as a way to advance towards relational unity with the natural world.

Summary: Equality; de-hierarchization; closeness to the real; relational oneness and subversion of anthropocentrism through legal fiction.

#3. Global South Perspectives

The discussion in the group turned immediately to the issue of indigeneity. It is a shared view that this concept relates to appropriation and is a heavily politicized and politically charged one. The question thus has been raised: is indigeneity rather a concept that can be used to inform relational strategies?

It is moreover important to distinguish between indigenous knowledge and traditional/local ecological knowledges. As such, there is a serious risk that the concept of indigeneity is being fetishised and/or romanticized, especially in Europe and in the West where there is a general refusal to identify with the Earth. People are essentially rooted to the land. So, perhaps instead of attempting to apply notions of indigeneity within Europe, it may be more productive to explore local traditions such as ancient cults or paganism.

Summary: Appropriation; traditional ecological knowledge; paganism.

#4. Challenges and Strategies

The main challenges in achieving the Rights of Nature as discussed in the group relate to issues of ownership and agency. In some contexts, such as the Wadden Sea, grassroots approaches are not really working, and top-down approaches have shown fostering resistance as the Rights of Nature are perceived as “law coming from the outside”. In Iceland, lack of responsibility and apathy emerge as key factors hindering the adoption of Rights of Nature. Overall, the need for more collective imagination, physical plus metaphysical thinking, enlightenment and enlivenment, cultural

underrepresentation and lack of active citizenship are all factors that emerge as obstacles to the Rights of Nature.

Summary: Apathy; collective imagination; enlivenment.

Group 7

#1. Your Waterbody

The group discussion centered on how individuals and communities establish connections with bodies of water. For some, connection was understood through the local community and embodied sensorial connection. Initiatives attempt to encourage this connection by hosting riverside walks so that the public can embody this connection. For others, like the Deep Sea, embodied connection poses a challenge as it is not easily accessible; neither is there a human community. However, these obstacles can be overcome through innovative and creative practices like taking people and policymakers snorkeling and scuba diving. Another challenge that came up with regards to community was the question of who the community is or who can claim guardianship over the water body. Some initiatives face resistance from locals who question why the international community has become invested in their landscape. Guardianship can become exclusionary when people believe they have more rights to the landscape than other people. Can a landscape/water body be defined by insiders and outsiders, or should it be defined by its non-human community? Whose consent is required when acting in defense of a water body: that of human communities, or that of the more-than-human world?

Participants also examined the role of education, art and design in connecting with nature, raising River Stewards and utilizing art and design as tools for knowledge and ritual creation.

Summary: Embodied and sensorial connection; More-than-human community; guardianship; ritual creation and education.

#2. The Concept of the Rights of Nature

Participants argued that nature does not need laws or rights, but that these laws are for humans. Even by trying to move away from anthropocentrism, the discussion noted that legal mechanisms often reproduce anthropocentric logic through which to measure and protect nature. Rights of Nature merely repurpose Western cosmologies built on a language of rights and justice. Still, it was agreed that Rights of Nature can be used as a tool to achieve other aims, such as ‘organism democracy’. It is a ‘plastic term’ that can be shaped to fit different contexts. In the case of the River Don in Sheffield, the participant argues that Rights of Nature should address the question ‘What are the conditions in order for every being to thrive? And who has the responsibility to take care of these circumstances?’ Somebody suggested that Rights of Nature is merely a means of ‘catching up with where we need to be’. In this sense Rights of Nature is more about an ontological shift than a legal tool, although

interestingly for the Rio Machangara, legal rights preceded social recognition. For the River Zenne, Rights of Nature helped to claim legitimacy over certain worldviews or claims.

One participant also asked what the role of Rights of Nature was in the context of destroyed landscapes or grieving lost landscapes in the context of migration. How can one connect to a landscape that has been lost?

Summary: Anthropocentrism; tool for organism democracy; Rights of Nature as a plastic term; claiming legitimacy; lost landscapes.

#3. Global South Perspectives

This question was faced with considerable criticism. Why separate the global north and global south? Participants expressed that these ideas should not be limited to certain areas or people but should come from within humans and landscapes. This language merely reinforces separatist colonial binaries. The table was also keen to recognize that indigeneity is everywhere. The conversation moved between finding sameness and difference. One participant admitted that when they had exchanged with an indigenous person, their words, dress, and song were powerful and spiritual and somehow different. Nevertheless, participants underscored the importance of avoiding romanticization or essentialization of Indigenous peoples and traditions.

Another discussion topic was the linguistic value of certain indigenous cultures, where linguistic differences can help us see what Western ontologies are missing. This revealed how the colonial system worked on disconnection for such a long time, and a new language and way of being must be created. In this sense, Rights of Nature is not about indigenous or Global South worldviews but about alternative ways of knowing, being and speaking. The discussion drew parallels with feminist, queer, ecological and disability studies, all of which have created new and alternative vocabularies and frameworks for care and transformation. To move away from anthropocentric thinking, it was argued that these ontologies can also come from the more-than-human world, turning to the rivers and water to learn about systems of reciprocal care.

Another topic centered around the way in which indigenous communities have cared for their ecosystems, but it is important not to reify indigenous cultures since they also can harm nature; the example of hunting mammoths to the point of extinction was given. This sparked a debate, but eventually it was agreed that all humans make mistakes. Once this is recognized, a regenerative mindset that comes from a place of humility and willingness to learn can be built.

Summary: Colonial binaries; sameness and difference; alternative ways of knowing and being; queer ecologies; feminist care.

#4. Challenges and Strategies

How to represent a body that is ecologically, socially, or culturally unknown, as is the case with the Deep Sea. Speaking to people with an ancestral connection to the Deep Sea, like the indigenous inhabitants of Hawaii, helps generate an understanding through mythology. The challenges regarding approaching and communicating with policymakers were also discussed. This sparked the question of who is to be targeted when a body of water crosses state borders, as with the Dogger Bank or the Deep Sea? The question of how to mediate the connection with nature in a language that is heard by policymakers was further deliberated. While in Latin America, Rights of Nature is a framework that resonates widely, it was suggested that in Europe the language of public health or ‘one health’ might resonate more widely.

Strategies around relationship building were discussed: how to address diverse audiences in terms they understand while maintaining core values? This is where finding an overarching issue can be beneficial. Then these issues can be framed in ways that give nature a voice.

Participants also examined the hierarchy of senses: sight prevails over smell and touch. Engaging the public and policymakers through embodied and sensorial connection with the landscape was proposed as a strategy for fostering environmental connection. Furthermore, macro-landscapes prevail over micro-landscapes, so how can human engagement with the micro-processes through touch, smell and taste be encouraged?

Summary: Mediating language to policy makers; One Health; hierarchy of the senses.

Group 8

#1. Your Waterbody

The conversation was heavily dominated by the women representing Mar Menor. For them the lagoon represents far more than a *body of water*—it is the landscape of their lives, woven into their most loving memories of family events, childhood holidays, and friendships.

Many grew up near Mar Menor and their early experiences were shaped by the sound, the smell, the view of the Mar Menor. These women speak of a ‘sensorial archive’ of the lagoon—the quality of its water, its aroma, the constant presence of the sea in the horizon, the murmur of the sea at night. When all of it began disappearing, they felt what they describe as an ‘instinct’ to act, to defend el Mar Menor. Beyond emotional and identity connections, there are health connections. One of the ladies’ stories is particularly striking: diagnosed with ELA, she found recovery through swimming in the Mar Menor. Doctors would prescribe ‘baños’ en the Mar Menor to heal skin conditions and chronic pain. Children were encouraged to swim in its waters when they had eczema or other ailments. This changed dramatically after the first green soup in 2016. Now doctors don’t recommend babies and infants go into the water as they are toxic and polluted.

Summary: Affective relationship; health; emotional archive; a desperate impulse to take action.

#2. The Concept of the Rights of Nature

The discussion around Rights of Nature revealed many tensions around the usefulness of the tool and its transformational capacity. While participants acknowledge this framework as a Western instrument—rooted in ethical dimensions based on extractivist approaches to nature—they were faced with a paradox: the language of *rights* itself is a Western paradigm, and some worry that the extractivist ontological relationship humans maintain with nature remains unchanged when adopting the Rights of Nature framework.

More criticism arose when one participant worried that law “forms the economic foundation of private property, legitimizing the sale of land and, historically, extractivism itself.” Yet, for many activists, including those who represent el Mar Menor, legal rights represent the only viable alternative. “We want justice, and for justice to be served, we need to have the law on our side”. If they want to achieve justice for el Mar Menor, they need a juridical framework. One of the participants suggested going a step further: the solution lies not just in “granting nature rights”, but in “reordering the hierarchy of rights, questioning which rights matter most and to whom.”

Representatives of Mar Menor are convinced that, without local transformations, a global reordering of climate and nature will be impossible. They compare Rights of Nature with the circulation and traffic codes and regulations – a code that is internationally understood and respected, they say.

Summary: Western legal framework; extractivist ontology unchanged.

#3. Global South Perspectives

Many in the table agree that for indigenous communities, distance from nature does not exist originally; separation from Nature only occurred during and after colonization; when land was taken, and ancestral territories became private property.

Some believe that Ecofeminism can be a tool “for returning to origins”.

Several participants defend that Indigenous communities do not need Rights of Nature because they have never constructed this distance in the first place. Western thought operates through binary oppositions: animism versus monotheism, cosmology versus extractivism, balance with nature versus imbalance, buen vivir versus laws. Indigenous communities, some people from the table argue, live within the first half of the dualism: in cosmological relationships, in balance. Some people from the table, however, are critical with this approach as it is romanticizing and exoticizing indigenous culture in the ‘abstract’.

Summary: Western dualism hindering change; danger of romanticizing indigeneity.

#4. Challenges and Strategies

The most salient challenges identified by participants for Mar Menor are political inaction; expansion of intensive agriculture; expansion of industrial livestock; mining; urban development; and motor sports. Like one participant jokingly said, “we have all the bads of at once”.

Another challenge for el Mar Menor is what they call “intervenciones cosmeticas” (roughly translated, “greenwashing”). They refer to multimillion projects funded by European grants designed to create the appearance of action without addressing root causes. They elevate the example of installing a boardwalk so people won’t walk over the mud, which, in their opinion, basically does nothing to the source of pollution.

Another major challenge is the lack of enforcement of existing regulations to protect Mar Menor. The activists point to the “Topillo case” as emblematic: when administrative sanctions should have been imposed on polluters, the fines were ridiculous—four cents for every forty liters of contaminated water dumped into the Mar Menor. Activists instead demand obliging polluters to cover costs for environmental restoration rather than paying fines.

For the Spree River in Berlin, a main challenge is that public policy is skeptical of the need for new laws to protect the river. They argue that the city and region already have environmental laws. Why create more? The river has another huge challenge, namely, it is primarily viewed as a “highway”: a water way for ships and tourist boats. And more critically they think citizens have neither an emotional nor an identity connection with the river whatsoever, nothing compared with the deep identification it seems so many people have with Mar Menor. Moreover, they point out to the internationalisation of the movement in defense of Mar Menor —how it gained international presence and that seems difficult to replicate for their water bodies. Another crucial challenge is that their countries lack legal mechanisms such as the Popular Legislative Initiative (ILP). These participatory tools they say do not exist in the French and German legal systems.

Strategies: The ILP became a “ray of light for Rights of Nature struggles elsewhere,” one of the participant says. Inspiring people all over the world. Another strategy is “relentless persistence”: weekly meetings and actions; actions to pick up “Basuraleza” (natural trash?) from beaches; demonstrations; marches; international events like “Abrazo al Mar Menor”; etc. They want to remain as visible and loud as possible. And they jokingly say, it helps we are retired.

Summary: Political inaction; greenwashing; non-enforcement; lack of emotional identification; persistent activism; (lack of) legal mechanisms.

4. Reflections

The World Café was a highly interactive space that brought together researchers, activists, and artists from diverse nationalities and water-body contexts. This encounter fostered a rich exchange and co-production of knowledge, leading to insightful reflections on the current understandings of how water bodies are perceived, experienced, protected, and represented by their communities. The discussion highlighted the wide diversity of conceptions on the Rights of Nature as well as the diversity in represented water bodies — ranging from rivers, coastal zones, and lagoons surrounded by populations to more remote environments such as glaciers, icebergs, and the deep sea. These bodies are connected through broader ecological and social processes, creating complex multi-scalar entanglements. Understanding these interconnections reveals a continuum of approaches to water-body protection, spanning from *personal to societal perspectives*.





At the **personal level**, the goal of transformation lies in fostering individual connections with nature through sensorial, ritual, artistic, and contemplative practices. This perspective is rooted in everyday experiences and processes of memory-making that strengthen a sense of place and belonging through intimate relationships with water. Such deep, personal transformations can be *powerful* drivers of local change but may be *limited* in their capacity to generate the wider societal transformations required for effective protection.

At the **societal level**, a more pragmatic form of transformation emerges through institutional efforts to reform legal frameworks and public policies for the sustainable protection of water bodies. Appealing to the *rights* of nature, an appeal is made to the law, which is the organizing mechanism of institutionalized societies (municipalities, states, et cetera). This perspective is grounded in collective action, advocacy, and the creation of counter-narratives that can influence public opinion and political will. However, as the people in the field acknowledge, strategies are also entangled with epistemic, ontological gender, and intergenerational differences and are often challenged by attempts at cooptation, misuse, or romanticization. For example, nuance about the substance from indigenous world views may get lost when a more “mainstream” audience is getting involved. Thus, the tools for change at a societal level may *enlarge* the potential impact but *limit* the capacity for paradigmatic transformations based on deep understandings of different epistemologies.

Both personal and societal transformation efforts have been enriched by **transnational network-building** which fosters collaboration among Western countries and allows for exchange between

Western and non-Western epistemologies. Protection initiatives for European water bodies, for example, increasingly draw inspiration from decolonial perspectives that reject the duality between nature and humanity, moving away from epistemologies rooted in patriarchy, Christianity, and capitalism.

While both personal and societal transformations are necessary, **tension** persists between these two levels of change. Moving from the personal to the societal change requires rescaling narratives and building alliances that can translate affective and symbolic dimensions into pragmatic and material forms of engagement capable of mobilizing broader, more heterogeneous groups. The key question that remains is to what extent these two levels of transformation can be negotiated without compromising their fundamental goals.

The usage of art as a form of expression seems to hover between the personal and societal level; whereas artistic expressions can be highly personal, and whereas engaging with art is often a deeply personal experience, artistic expressions are directed towards a larger audience and more ‘public’ or ‘societal’ in this sense. This is perhaps one explanation for the observation of certain participants that art seems to open a semi-private space for knowledge exchange, where government officials can freely get acquainted with new (political) ideas.

Another example of practices hovering between the personal and the societal level is the engagement with the academic world, academic vocabulary, reliance on academic (scientific) data, advancement of academic non-anthropocentric theories and direct collaboration with academics. It is noteworthy, reading the above reports about the various round tables, that academic language and concepts are frequently used. Studying is a *personal* learning experience, whereas academic outreach can form a *contribution to public debates*. It should be noted here as well that at least some participants are skeptical about academic knowledge-making (based on critique that often also stems from the academic world itself). Interestingly, the complex messages of academic thinking undergo a similar dynamic as the general movement described above: communicating them to a wider audience enlarges their impact on the one hand, but requires simplifying them on the other, whereas communicating them to specialist audience allows the results to be more refined but gives less chances to impact reigning ideas in society as a whole.

This analysis can be visualized as follows:

Personal

Goal: Transformations on the individual level

Focus: Emotional and embodied connection with nature.

Tools: Sensorial experiences and rituals.

Societal

Goal: Transformation of institutions.

Focus: Change to policy and law.

Tools: Campaigning and building new narratives



5. Conclusions

The participatory event held on 24 September 2025, at the University of Amsterdam gathered 68 participants from various institutions and water bodies to explore the concept of Rights of Nature. The discussions underscored the importance of both personal and societal transformations in advancing nature protection. On a personal level, participants highlighted the significance of sensorial, ritual, artistic, and contemplative practices in fostering deep connections with nature. These practices were seen as essential for strengthening a sense of place and belonging through intimate relationships with water, though their impact on broader societal change may be limited. At the societal level, the focus was on the need for institutional reforms and public policy changes to ensure sustainable protection of water bodies. Participants discussed the challenges and opportunities of collective action, advocacy, and creating counter-narratives to influence public opinion and political will. The event emphasized the value of transnational collaboration and the integration of decolonial perspectives, which dialogue with as well as challenge traditional Western epistemologies. After having discussed the results, one key takeaway for our team was the tension between personal and societal transformations, with discussions on how to translate personal, affective experiences into broader societal actions. The event concluded that both levels of transformation are necessary and must be carefully negotiated to achieve effective and sustainable nature protection as well as the desired paradigmatic changes.

Annexes

Annex 1. Event Programme

10:00–10:15	Doors open; coffee and registration
10:15–10:30	Opening by the Team of the project Rights of Nature: through the Looking Glass Welcome; Research findings so far; Challenges, strategies for Rights of Nature in Europe What will we do today and how do we hope to co-create knowledge, understanding and strategies together with you.
10:30–11:15	World café 1
11:15–12:00	World café 2
12:00–12:45	Lunch provided at <i>De Brug</i>
12:45–13:30	World café 3
13:30–14:15	World café 4
14:15–14:30	Closing

Annex 2. Free, Prior, Informed Consent Form

Participant Information Letter

Dear participant,

You are partaking in our research project *Rights of Nature: Beyond the looking glass* conducted by our interdisciplinary team based at the University of Amsterdam.

Purpose of the project

Rights of Nature has materialized in policies and legal frameworks mostly in the Global South. However, recently, this narrative is gradually becoming a global movement and gaining traction in European jurisdictions, including the Netherlands. This project aims at assessing the development of the narratives and practices of Rights of Nature in the Netherlands and how this new perspective interplays with anthropocentric and ecocentric conceptualizations of nature which are grounded on western ontologies. To this goal, this project aims to 1. Identify the current Rights of Nature stakeholders and initiatives in the Netherlands, 2. To engage scholars and Rights of Nature stakeholders in developing practical applications of the theoretical insights, and 3. To examine the conceptualisations of the Rights of Nature in The Netherlands (and EU to some extent) and assess their connection and contrasts with the Global South conceptualizations.

Instructions

The interviews will be semi-structured, lasting around 1-2 hours, and taking place in an environment the participant is comfortable in. The participant will respond to some prepared questions regarding definition of the nature in question (in this case the Waddenzee), how people understand their relationship with it, the past trajectory, present status, and future plans for the Rights of Nature initiative, as well as strategies and obstacles perceived. The interview will be recorded if consent is given, and we will share any results with you prior to publication.

Voluntary participation & risks

You will be participating in this research on a voluntary basis. This means you are free to stop taking part at any stage without consequences or penalty. If you decide to stop or withdraw your consent, all the information gathered up until then will be permanently deleted. This research has no known risks.

Privacy and data protection

The information gathered will be used for publication in scientific journals only. Your personal information will not be viewed by third parties without your express permission. Participants can request more information from the researcher at any time about their rights as data subjects under the EU privacy law, the GDPR.

The data that the researchers obtain from you or your organization will, of course, be kept confidential. In the final report, only the organizations will be listed, and both the names and statements will identify an individual only if it is already public data or explicitly authorized. Publication of the final report is expected around October to December.

Furthermore, the confidential data derived from this study will be stored digitally on secure servers to which only the researchers will have access. After a period of ten years, the data will be deleted. The interviews will not be used for other or future research.

If the complaints concern the use of data related to this research, please contact the Data Protection Officer of the University of Amsterdam at fg@uva.nl or 020-525 53 91.

Further information

For further information, please contact Tessel Boek (t.boek@uva.nl), Emilia Guzman (e.guzmanramos@uva.nl), Laura Burgers (l.e.burgers@uva.nl), Colin Hickey (c.j.hickey@uva.nl), Matteo Fermeglia (m.fermeglia@uva.nl), Fabio de Castro (f.decastro@uva.nl), or Gabriela Russo Lopes (g.russolopes@uva.nl). If you have any complaints regarding this project, you can contact the Secretary of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Law of the University of Amsterdam (s.windhouwer@uva.nl).

Informed Consent

I have been clearly informed about the research project, and I consent to participate in this research. I retain the right to revoke this consent without having to provide any reasons for my decision. I am aware that I am entitled to discontinue the research at any time and can withdraw my participation.

I consent to participate in this research.

I consent to the storage of my personal data for a period of 10 years.

Signature:

Date:

1.3

INDIGENOUS INFLUENCES ON OUR INITIATIVES

Romanticization of "indigenous" + global south - reinforces colonialism + white nationalism
History is complicated

Cultural attitude. Colonization has played out differently across the continent

Who knows the water? Who knows the land?

Degrees of connection - dangerous to assume any people are completely disconnected from the land

Historical trauma in Europe - which hurts needs to be addressed

Europe colonized itself as it colonized other peoples.

Europe has to figure its shit out. (There's work to do...) "mother of all research projects."

Who is carrying the weight of our problems? (colonial effects)
indigenous people carry an outsized burden (global south)

Lack of global south influence on European initiatives.

We all see the same things (issues, needs, when we look around at our environment)

Indigenous knowledge is local knowledge + TEK

EUROPEAN INDIGENITY REFLECTIONS

Vulnerable topic.
 more funding for research
 voluntary projects

1.4

CHALLENGES

WORK WITH YOUNGER GENERATIONS

- Extinction Rebellion - different modes of activism
- Schools - engage students

PROPRIETARY LAW
(nature belongs to itself)

Methodological
↳ institutional
↳ personal/social

UTILIZE A THEORY OF CHANGE

CHALLENGES

SOLUTIONS

OUTDATED SCHOOL CURRICULUMS

MORE QUESTIONS THAN ANSWERS

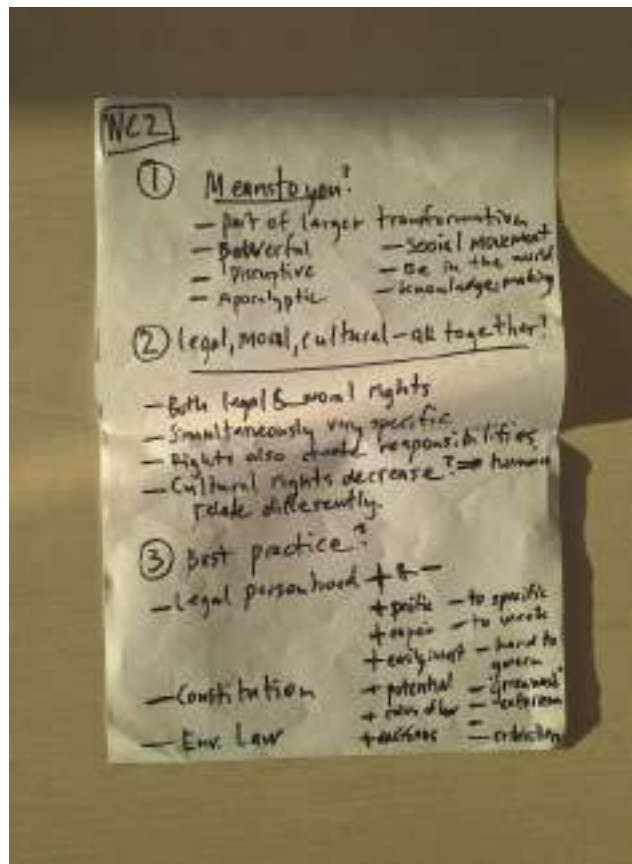
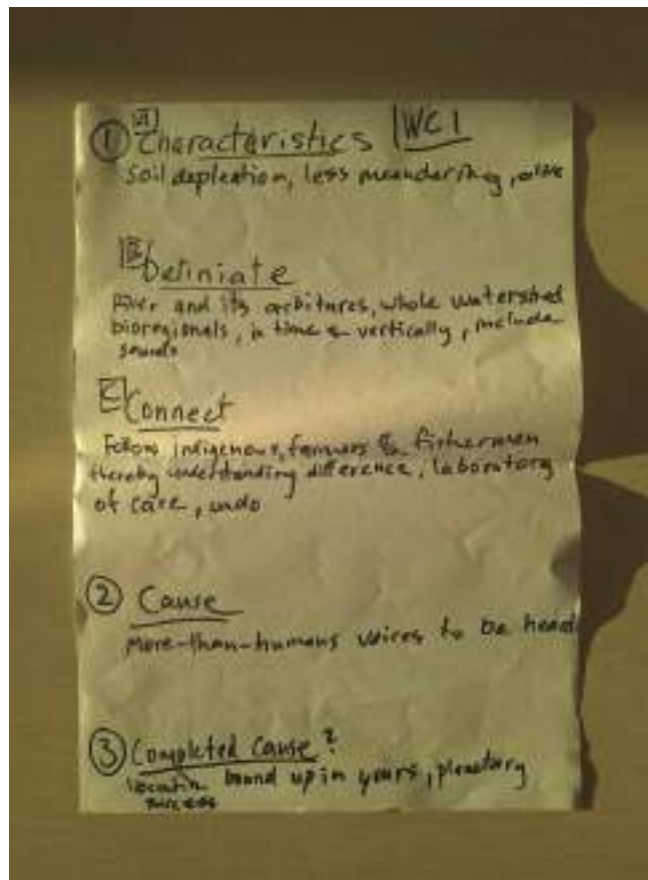
How do you speak (for/with) nature?
- eccentric
- not tokenistic
- esoteric
- independent
- art...
- more than rational...

What is water expressing?
memories, histories, etc.

Methods w/ SWEFELSIKULL
- Precise language agreed on by group
- Addressing xenophobia in Iceland

INTER/MULTI-NATIONAL COOPERATION

Group 2



WC31

① Infl. by indigenous peoples?

- Own ceremonies, own indigeniety
- Decolonize ourselves
- Wait for invitation
- Moral ecological debt
- Terrain - inspiration and knowledge learning by authorities

② Live in practice with indigeniety

- Find own way of doing it
- Can we do this?

blood & soil
trap
- or how to do it with the inclusion of diversity, multiplicity of
- rooted and diverse

③ European indigeniety?

- How?
- In which way?
- Is it possible?

WC4)

① Challenges in the work

- Engaging communities is difficult, but necessary
- Use all tools

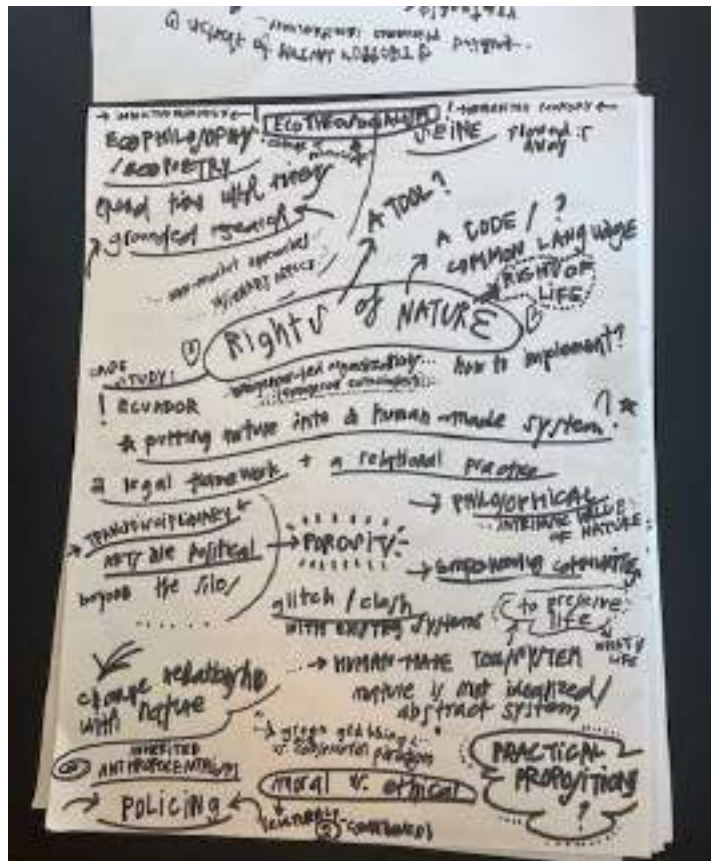
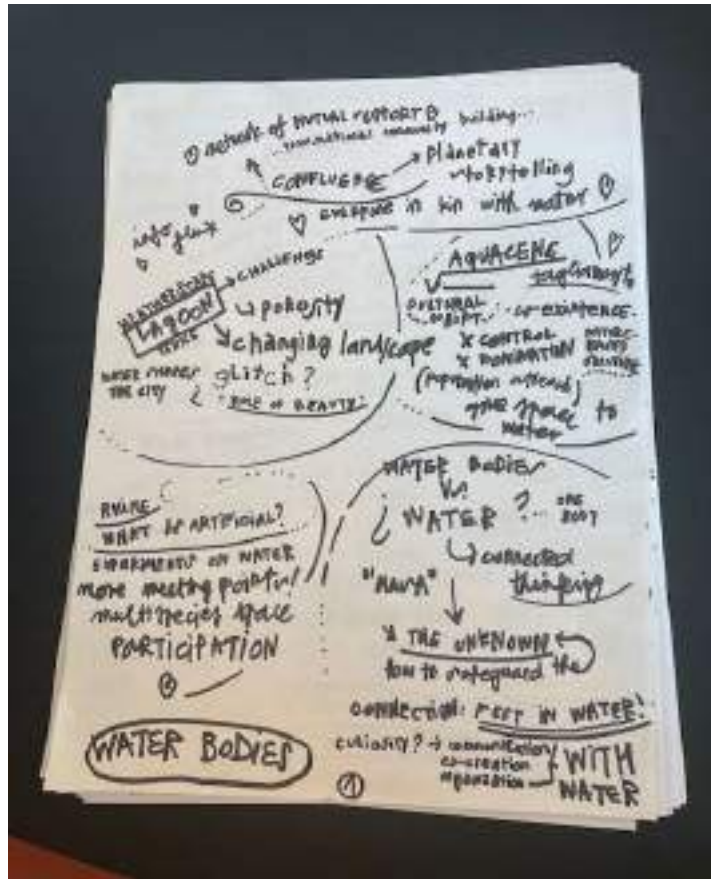
② Strategies & activities

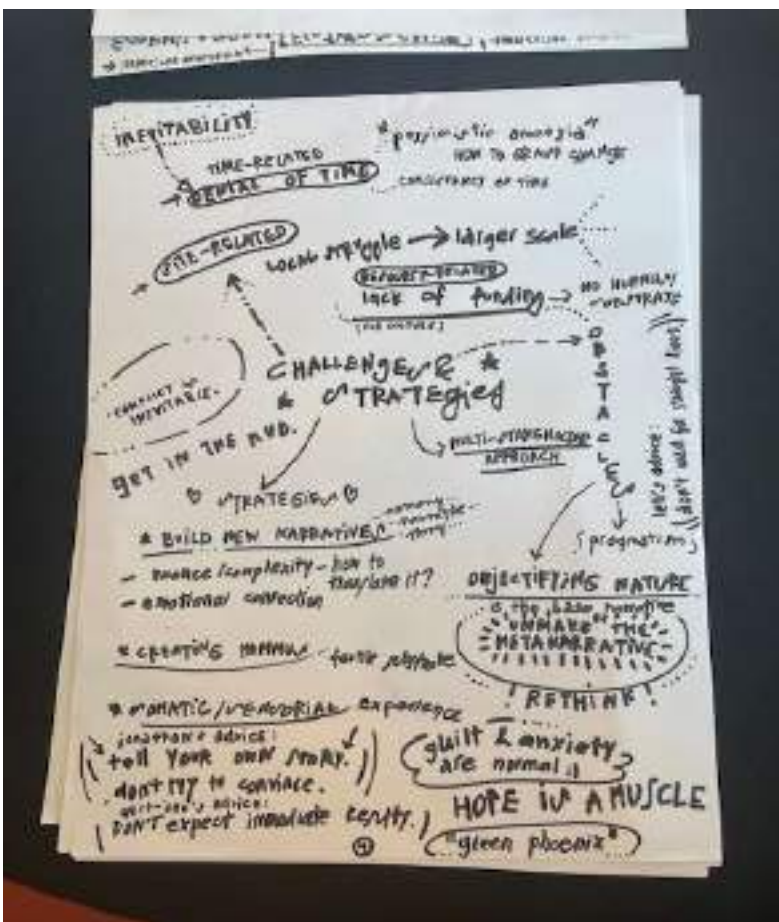
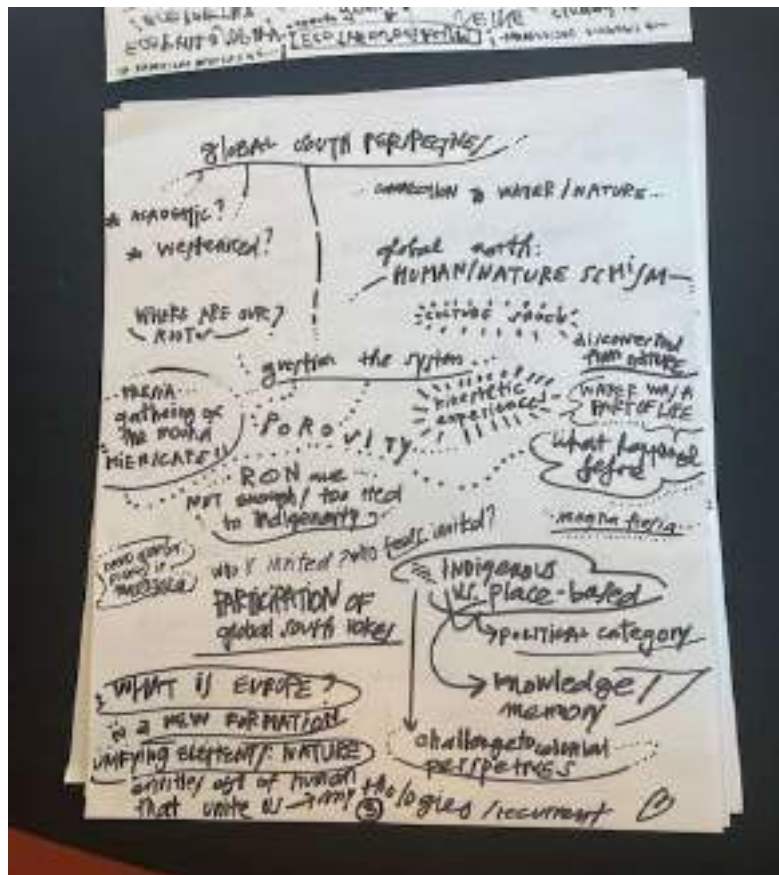
- Main trials/trials by Sub. of Alaska
 - Introducing an empty chair
 - sounds
 - sensory representation
 - intervention in
 - negative view
- parliament - serious
- of things - stakeholders
- - real judge

③ Obstacles faced

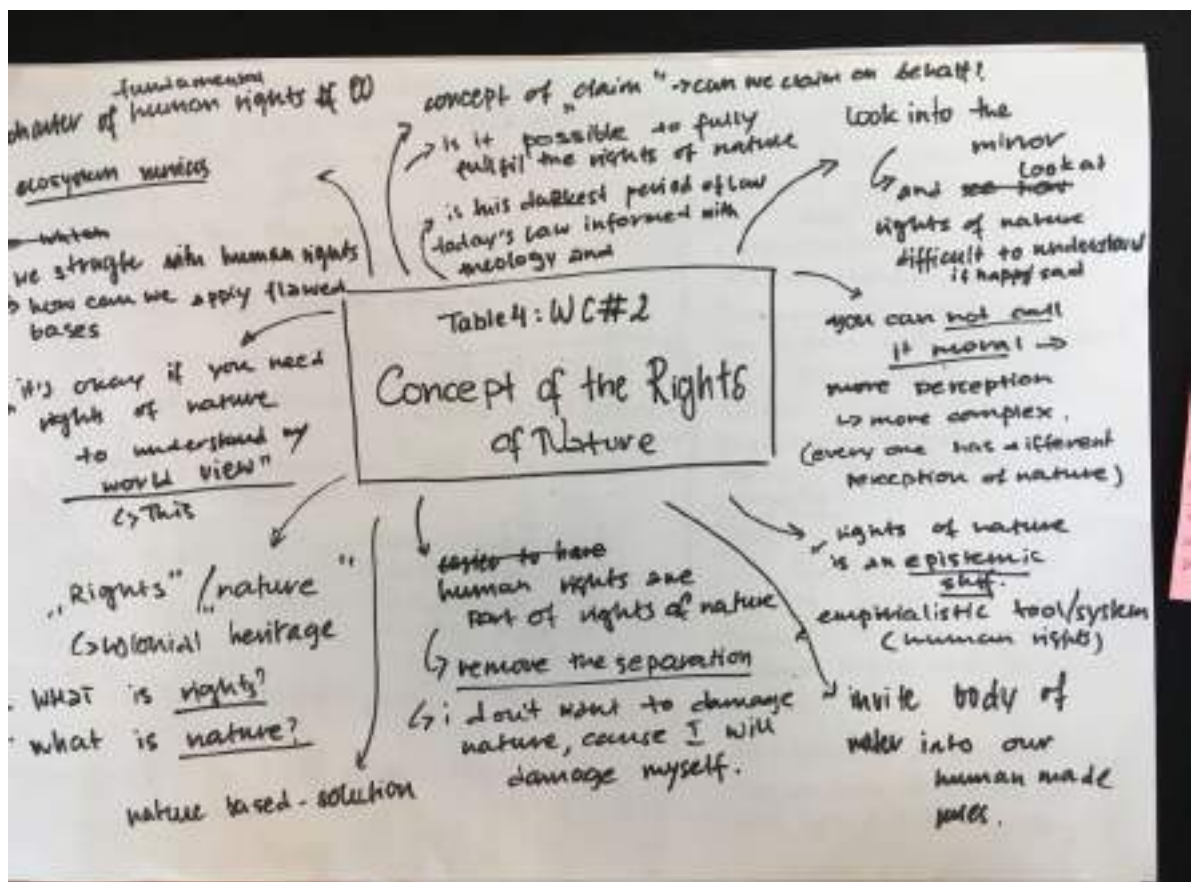
- sensitive to different practices
 - how to do it?
- Engaged org. that are maintaining status quo.

Group 3





Group 4



1. Is your initiative influenced by (indigenous) perspectives from the Global South?

2. How do you link these influences to the contexts of your water body?

MAPUCHE INFLUENCES
 BIOBIO RIVER → CHILE WATER COE. NO RELATIONSHIP
 → PHILIPPOTTI TRAINED IN PARIS IS WORK ON THAT
 COULD MEDIATE CULTURAL TOP

• FOCUSING WORK FOR WATER RIGHTS
 BASED ON THE RIGHT, AND WITH THEM?
 - RIGHTS OF CHILDREN - LABS ON SUBSTANCE
 - LAB ON INVASIVE PLANTS

• VENICE DEC. LOOKS AT HOW
 KNOWLEDGE & POWERS INTO LAW.

• IN EU HUMAN RIGHTS ARE PART OF "INDIGENOUS" CULTURE?
 → EVEN IF EU CITIZENS ARE NOT IND, THEY CAN HAVE LOCAL
 ATTACHMENT AND CULTURE.

• INDIGENOUS THAT IS WASTED IN THE WEST
 NOT EXIST. ARE NOT, BUT RESERVE RIGHTS

• IND. IS AN INCREDIBLY LOADED TERM THAT
 CONNECTS WITH COLONIZATION, WHAT ABOUT
 VOCABULARY CULTURES? BODIES OF INDIGENITY CAN ALSO BE
 USED AND EXPLOITED FOR HEALTH (UR. WAR, EXTRACTIVISM)
 RUSSIA: 1990 SURVEILLANCE
 IND. GROUPS

Table 4: W/C #3
 GLOBAL SOUTH
 PERSPECTIVES

3. Is European Indigeneity or indigeneity to you and if so, how do you see it?

→ TRADITIONAL / LOCAL KNOWLEDGE
 → ATTENTION TO LOCAL KNOWLEDGE
 → LOVE FOR WATER IS NOT EXCLUSIVE TO INDIGENOUS
 BUT INDIGENOUS IS CHARACTERIZED TO BE BELONGING

Not feeling entitled to talk or act
 Not enough people to help and speak out
 Issue how to speak about the environment
 and rights with people
 No money for the research
 No trust in politics-politicians
 Corruption and lobbying company
 dishonesty

main challenges

hasn't taken seriously
 division between activists
 and other rights of nature
 organization
 Division between people
 Deafness of public power
 (no action and public support
 by government)
 Criminalizing ecologists
 Organization treated as terrorists
 groups, removal from the
 country.

Obstacles

Borders & Territories
 Cutting funds, no money
 design to work on the
 nature rights and human
 rights
 Companies and politicians
 supporting technologies
 that we should challenge

CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES

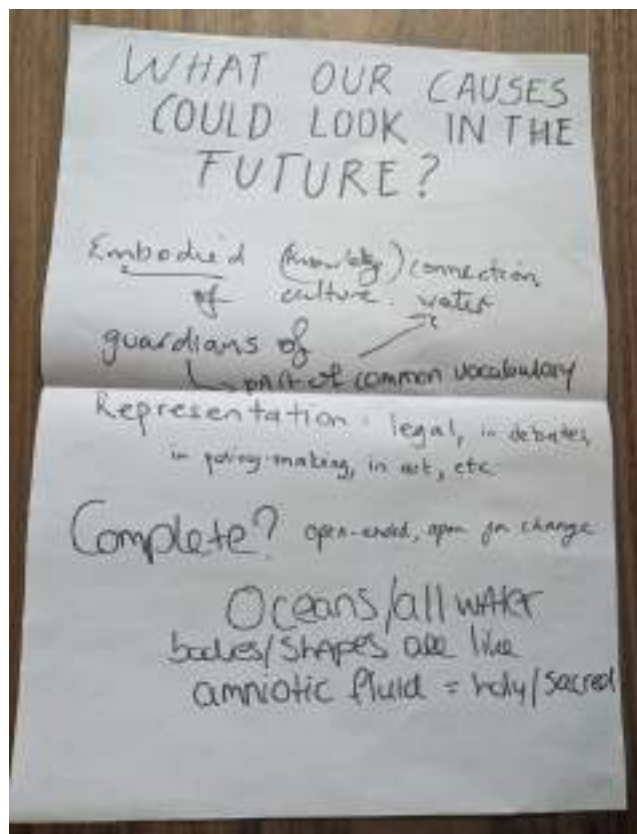
• Radical experimentations
 • Alliances
 • No borders administration and protections
 • activities • Common goal

strategies

credibility by events
 • going into politics
 talking with the political party
 • Network building
 • Population to talk about the issue
 • Group together
 • Human initiatives

• New independent
 tools, technologies
 • Networking and
 working together
 • Sharing strategies
 Emotional
 connections

Group 5



Q 2

Something that has to be
recognised.

↳ paradigm shift

Spiritual question

New anthropocentric

↳ another way of being

We are one / alone

Rights → human granted

Restorative Justice

Recognise as a risk

Both morally & legal depend

Legal is depending

Being there can affect

CONSTANZA

It's a frame work within
our system / something

Education change must

The importance

Results - it has worked

Education

Depth - ~~depth~~

↳ not natural rights
with our depth

CONSTANZA

STRATEGIES & CHALLENGES

Governance
- Access to clean water
- Powerful stakeholders
- Lobbying, Government
→ Disruptive

Physical
Risk, it
will (change)
Technological
Language
→ Corporate
→ Lack of communication
→ New standards &
national law - restrict
→ Capitalism
→ extraction resources
→ extraction from
ecosystems

Community - Actors of Action
↳ Building
↳ Use of emotion
↳ Has ability to build spirit
and address
↳ Process feelings
communally
↳ Funding solutions
& put into the
world

Storytelling
- don't mean!!
↳ memory work

What is global south?

Are semi people / greenland & north american
not indigenous people?

How to find your own indigeneity?

What would be a western indigenous
culture?

prosecution as a necessity to be indigenous
appropriation

western world identified with city & religion
indigenous connected to land.

Local ecological knowledge
traditional ecological knowledge

water transgresses from this discussion,

since ones you think it you are part
of the ecosystem.

prescription colonial history

Are we ourselves colonized by the western
world? influenced

Q3.

INDIGENITY AS APPROPRIATION

↳ POLITICALISED → ARE TERMS TO UNFOOT POLITICAL
STRATEGIES?

INDIGENOUS ≠ TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE
LOCAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

REFUSING TO IDENTIFY WITH EUROPE IN THE WEST?

PETITIONING / PARADIGMATIC UNIFORMITY?

SHOULD WE RATHER LOOK AT CULTURE IN EUROPE?

↳ MEANING?

WATER DRUGS DISCUSSION ABOUT BELONGING

POLITICALLY COASTING

RENDER POWER TO THE LAND / ECOSYSTEM?

Q4.

- call from the outside; collect money?
- contract not money needed to see in the workshop; top-down approach
- resistance; structured; steady

ICONS → use of responsibility; activity; close relations
active citizenship;

CITIZENSHIP → political lobby

COLLECTIVE IMAGINATION
PRACTICE + NETWORKING

CULTURE UNDERREPRESENTATION
ENLIGHTENMENT / ENLIGHTENED

6

Challenges, not one

Compare Mar Mar - Waddansee

Islandic glacier to President
People are in a bubble - not care
corrupt - small society

No responsibility, Island, Norway
No active citizenship

Island - similar Mar Mar - some in parliament
Where is law made? Where operated

legal → Person head

STRATEGIES

collective imagination

Olo: Physical & Metaphysical; Pylce, imagination
Rituals, shaman - church

• Satria: - Masknepe - church was solution

OBSTACLES

ontological disagreement
enlightenment vs enlightenment

Taina Dams - meeting place

FUNDING!

Strategies - Relationships - how can we build them?

Not to abstract from, speak in their language but not fully
fitting + common sense. All not essential assistance

to the 10 - more quality + quantity
followers - more

Hierarchy of the senses - going to experience in non-landscape

→ going, hearing, smelling, the eye

we need training towards us we need to engage
but just we need to look and not out

Name tags that enable you to speak in different ways
at companies.

Describe your work body → what does it look like?

→ it's always just made it.

Practical Challenges - infrastructure.

When talking to bureaucratic people - compassion,
kindness or sensitivity, not to be intimidated
by the language of power.

Group 8

Photos not available.