

PRESS RELEASE FROM STOP ECOCIDE #FaceTheClimateEmergency



Greta, Luisa, Anuna, Adélaïde: citizens, scientists and influencers join youth activists calling on EU leaders to #FaceTheClimateEmergency and support making ecocide an international crime

[An open letter](#) from four well-known young climate activists - Greta Thunberg (Sweden), Luisa Neubauer (Germany), Anuna de Wever and Adélaïde Charlier (both from Belgium) - has called for EU member states to “*advocate to make ecocide an international crime at the International Criminal Court*”. Thousands of citizens, scientists and influencers have already put their names to the letter with more joining all the time. (See EU open letter press release [HERE](#))

Their list of demands marks a move for Thunberg and fellow youth activists towards proposing key solutions to the climate and ecological crisis - which they say is still not being treated as the emergency it is. “*We want leaders to address the root causes,*” says Thunberg.

Making ecocide an international crime features alongside divesting from and halting subsidies for fossil fuels. The open letter accompanying the demands states: “*We need to end the ongoing wrecking, exploitation and destruction of our life supporting systems and move towards a fully decarbonised economy that centres around the wellbeing of all people as well as the natural world.*”

[Jojo Mehta](#) is co-founder of the global campaign [Stop Ecocide](#) which works with international criminal lawyers, researchers, NGOs and small nation states towards making ecocide a crime at the International Criminal Court. She wholeheartedly agrees:

“Mass damage and destruction of ecosystems - ecocide - has led directly to the climate and ecological emergency we now face. As Greta has pointed out before, we already have the solutions. But until we close the door to the destruction, until we draw that line in the sand, finance and politics will continue to support the old ways. We cannot afford - our children, our planet cannot afford - for that to happen any more. It’s time to change the rules.”

Mehta sees establishing this crime as a simple, effective way to safeguard the life support systems for humanity and the planet.

“Criminal law is how we draw the moral line between what is acceptable and what is not. It’s also protective law - your life is protected because murder (homicide) is a crime. It’s becoming increasingly clear that there is a missing law to protect ecosystems in a similar way. This gap in legal protection has led us to a very dangerous place. Making ecocide an international crime is the simple course correction that can steer us towards safety and a truly healthy recovery, for people and for the living ecosystems on which we wholly depend.”

There is growing support for the move to make ecocide an international crime: last November Pope Francis [called for ecocide](#) as a “*fifth category of crimes against peace*”; in December the small island states of Vanuatu and the Maldives [called for serious consideration of ecocide crime](#) at the International Criminal Court’s assembly; earlier this year the Swedish workers movement [urged Sweden to lead on proposing it](#); and just last month President Macron of France [promised to champion it](#) on the international stage.