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Press release | 29.03.2023

European Parliament poised to recognize ecocide

Environmental Crime

Today, the European Parliament will present its position on the proposal for a directive on environmental crimes, including the recognition of ‘ecocide’ as "any conduct causing severe and widespread, or severe and long-term, or severe and irreversible damage" to the environment. As Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine continues, the Greens/EFA Group’s initiative specifically addresses environmental damage resulting from armed conflicts, such as the destruction of forest and agricultural fields and the pollution of rivers.

The Parliament’s position is expected to be adopted in the April plenary without any objections, followed by trilogue negotiations with the Commission and Council.

Marie Toussaint, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur in the lead Committee on Legal Affairs, comments:

“Today marks a victory for both humans and nature as the European Parliament aims to address the far-reaching harm caused by grave environmental damage, in particular by recognizing the most serious crime against the environment: ecocide. Environmental crimes are crimes against our collective future, and time is of the essence. Indigenous communities, areas of armed conflict, and marginalized communities are particularly vulnerable to severe destruction of the land and its resources, resulting in long-term and sometimes irreversible harm.

“The ecological crisis requires a legal revolution. The European Parliament understands the urgency of the situation and calls upon Member States to recognise ecocide. The ball is now in the Council’s court to finally end impunity for ecocide. The Greens/EFA have fought hard for this victory, and will continue to push for strong legal protections of the environment.”

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Opinion

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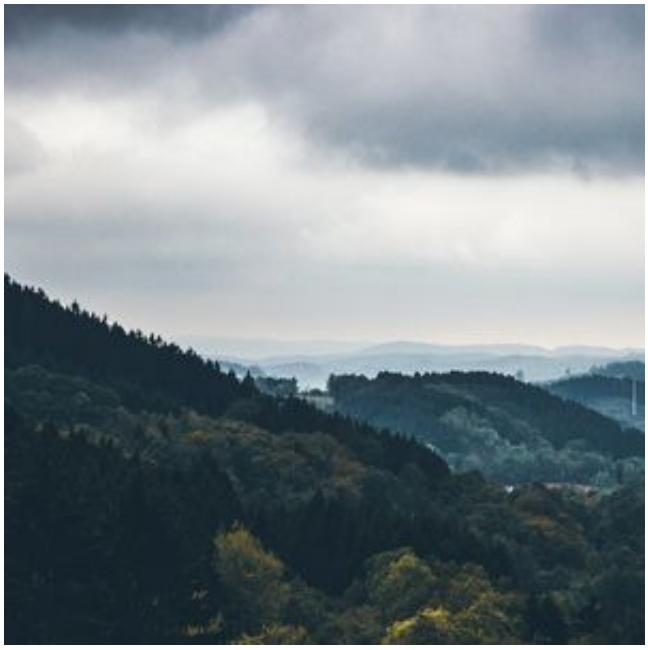


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