



# Ecocide Law – A defining step towards environmental accountability

## What?

Ecocide is the mass damage and destruction of the environment that we depend upon for our survival and there is currently no effective way to stop it. Criminal sections of environmental laws are national laws only and not all countries have strong environmental laws or the resources or willingness to prosecute violations.

## How?

By amending the Rome Statute, ecocide can become an international crime, prosecutable at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague. Persons of superior responsibility could then be held personally liable. This would change risk perception, stopping many potentially ecocidal activities from occurring.

Though not all countries are signatories to the Rome Statute, once the crime is in the Statute, any country subscribing to the principles of universal jurisdiction can prosecute non-nationals if a perpetrator sets foot in their territory.

To amend the Statute, two thirds of the States Parties to the Rome Statute need to support the amendment.

Each state has one vote.

There is a window of opportunity in 2022, with the UN Conference on Sustainable Development June 2-3 in Stockholm, followed by the ICC meeting at the end of the year. Leaders of sustainable businesses are now coming out in active support.

Companies can play a critical role in encouraging governments.

## Why?

Since businesses source and market all over the world, law needs to be international. In addition to protecting vital ecosystems, such legislation sets boundaries for human activities, levelling the playing field for business and contributing to **fair competition**.

By protecting carbon sinks in living nature, criminalising ecocide will also **reduce climate related risks**.

Those who act decisively, ensuring their business is taking a lead for the future, are likely to be more successful than those who lag behind.

Open support from business and other organisations is crucial, because powerful special interests stand to lose if the law comes into force. Wide support from responsible business is essential.

Standing up for ecocide law is an ethical choice. It shows a commitment to sustainable business that goes way beyond simply abiding by current regulations. Ecocide law is a powerful way to **protect biodiversity and human rights**.

Making that ethical choice may also be a boost for your business, helping you recruit the right talent. Increasingly, those who can pick and choose are opting to work for organisations driven by a purpose beyond profit.

## Act

Support for ecocide law is now gathering momentum, with government voices from Finland, Belgium, France, and Spain as well as the European Parliament and the International Corporate Governance Network, a global organisation led by investors responsible for assets of \$59 trillion.

### Here's how you can act

- Sign a [call to action](#) for governments,
- Publish your support,
- Talk to your government/other leading politicians (including from currently non-governing parties),
- Ensure your networks/industry association are aware of the benefits of ecocide law.