



Ecocide Law

for the Paris Agreement

INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATION – ECOCIDE LAW
– CAN HELP US REACH THE PARIS AGREEMENT.

Ecocide Law:

- **Protects carbon sinks.** Forests and oceans store huge amounts of carbon and need safeguarding through international legislation.
- **Requires resource extraction and production to use more careful methods.** This should help keep more of remaining fossil fuels in the ground.
- **Encourages financial flows towards renewable energy.** Seven percent of global GDP is spent on fossil fuel subsidies. Ecocide law supports decision makers to redirect funds.
- **Raises the international standard.**
- **Levels the international playing field,** supporting responsible companies and nations by contributing to fair competition. Many countries lack environmental laws, and in countries which do have laws, enforcement may be weak.
- **Prevents harm before it happens,** by encouraging decision makers to think twice before major decisions.

Ecocide Law also encourages a shift towards valuing nature, the foundation for our wellbeing.

Full report here:



Based on the report "Ecocide Law for the Paris Agreement. The Role of Ecocide Law in limiting global warming". The Schumacher Institute in collaboration with End Ecocide Sweden. Funded by the Swedish Postcode Foundation.

BACKGROUND/OVERVIEW

The proposed new international crime of ecocide describes the most serious acts of environmental destruction. An independent panel of experts in international law has produced a definition of ecocide for inclusion in the Statute of the International Criminal Court, alongside genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression. As an international crime, ecocide could be prosecuted anywhere, and would not be dependent on national law or domestic political will. In addition, as environmental damage can have cross-border and even global impacts, it makes sense to address it on the international level. International crimes are acts with such severe consequences that they are of concern to humanity as a whole. Making ecocide a crime would enable the legal system to hold top decision makers personally accountable.

THE EXPERT PANEL PROPOSED DEFINITION OF ECOCIDE

1. For the purpose of this statute, “ecocide” means unlawful or wanton acts committed with knowledge that there is a substantial likelihood of severe and either widespread or long-term damage to the environment being caused by those acts.

2. For the purpose of paragraph 1:

- a. **“Wanton”** means with reckless disregard for damage which would be clearly excessive in relation to the social and economic benefits anticipated;
- b. **“Severe”** means damage which involves very serious adverse changes, disruption or harm to any element of the environment, including grave impacts on human life or natural, cultural or economic resources;
- c. **“Widespread”** means damage which extends beyond a limited geographic area, crosses state boundaries, or is suffered by an entire ecosystem or species or a large number of human beings;
- d. **“Long-term”** means damage which is irreversible or which cannot be redressed through natural recovery within a reasonable period of time;
- e. **“Environment”** means the earth, its biosphere, cryosphere, lithosphere, hydrosphere and atmosphere, as well as outer space.



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