

CHAMPIONING THE CHANGE

Priorities for the next European Commission and European Parliament (2024-2029)



The Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) exists to protect the natural world and defend our basic human right to a secure environment. EJF works internationally to inform policy and drive systemic, durable reforms to protect our environment and defend human rights. We investigate and expose abuses and support environmental defenders, Indigenous peoples, communities, and independent journalists on the frontlines of environmental injustice. Our campaigns aim to secure peaceful, equitable and sustainable futures.

Introduction

As the citizens of the EU choose their next Parliament and the College of Commissioners is formed, the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) calls for a bold agenda centred on environmental protection, climate action, and human rights. EJF has supported many of the priority areas of the EU and is committed to continuing to support future EU policies that will help [save our planet and safeguard our future](#).

Our recent investigations into [exploitation and illegal fishing on Chinese vessels in the Southwest Indian Ocean](#) and the [destruction of the Pantanal wetland in Brazil](#) have brought to light the alarming pace of global environmental destruction, often accompanied by egregious human rights violations. These crucial issues underscore the urgent need for the EU's global leadership. EJF's recommendations highlight strategic priorities underrepresented in political discussions, envisioning the EU's next term, from 2024 to 2029, as a period of intensified efforts to combat illegal fishing and strengthen wetland protection worldwide.

In the next term, the EU should prioritise:

Across all policy areas ...

- **Strong Implementation of EU Laws:** Fully apply and enforce EU laws on the environment, oceans, and human rights. This includes implementing strict measures on fisheries control, combating illegal fishing, protecting nature and biodiversity, and enforcing human rights due diligence laws. Swift action should be taken against any breaches.
- **Sufficient Resources for Green Policies:** Ensure there is enough funding and staff to effectively implement and enforce green policies, at EU and Member State level.
- **No Roll-back of EU Green Standards:** Ensure no weakening of EU environmental and human rights laws or roll-back on international commitments. Instead, key environmental standards should be strengthened.



On specific issues ...

- 1. Protecting our Oceans:** Credibly lead the charge in ocean protection, by focusing on (1) ensuring effective application of the EU's laws against [illegal fishing](#) and promoting increased [transparency](#) in fisheries governance globally, (2) safeguarding marine ecosystems by protecting 30% of EU seas through implementation and enforcement of EU nature laws, and (3) stopping [deep-sea mining](#).
- 2. Preserving wetlands to combat climate change:** Promote nature-based solutions to combat [global heating](#), in particular safeguarding carbon-rich wetlands like [Brazil's Pantanal](#) by (1) [expanding the EU Deforestation Regulation](#) to cover wetlands and (2) mobilising funding for '[Wetland Partnerships](#)', crucial for protecting essential ecosystems while defending the rights of Indigenous peoples.
- 3. Promoting Corporate Responsibility and Ethical Supply Chains:** Strict and coherent enforcement of EU regulations covering deforestation, illegal fishing, forced labour, and corporate sustainability, restricting access to the EU markets for [products associated with human rights violations](#) and environmental harm. Ensure European businesses uphold ethical standards in their supply chains.

