



# ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Environmental benefits and burdens must be shared fairly. Those with political or economic power should not exploit the planet's resources to the detriment of poorer communities, future generations and the planetary ecosystem boundaries that make this planet liveable for humanity.

## CHALLENGES

- Europe has historically been and remains responsible for a disproportionately high share of global environmental destruction and resource consumption. Growing food on other continents negatively impacts local communities when huge amounts of their land and water resources are used up. Long transportation routes mean increased emissions.
- Human rights' defenders and environmental justice activists who oppose exploitation of their land and natural resources are increasingly threatened and even killed.
- The dominant unequal global economic system means more and more communities will continue to face violence when their environment is threatened.
- Damaging economic activities from mining to waste dumping have triggered the creation of a global movement for environmental justice that is reshaping how humanity lives on this planet.
- Environmental injustice also occurs within the EU. The poorest often find themselves on the frontline, living on the most environmentally degraded and health damaging sites.

WHILE **INDIGENOUS PEOPLE** ONLY REPRESENT **5%** OF THE GLOBAL POPULATION, THEY REPRESENT **15%** OF THE WORLD'S POOREST PEOPLE & ARE ON THE FRONTLINE OF **40%** OF THE WORLD'S **ENVIRONMENTAL CONFLICTS**.



SINCE 2009,  
THE NUMBER  
OF MURDERED  
ENVIRONMENTALISTS  
HAS RISEN FROM 1  
TO 4 A WEEK



HONDURAN ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST BERTA CÁCERES WAS MURDERED IN MARCH 2016

# FACTS AND FIGURES



IF EVERYONE CONSUMED LIKE EUROPE DID, WE WOULD NEED ALMOST 3 EARTHS



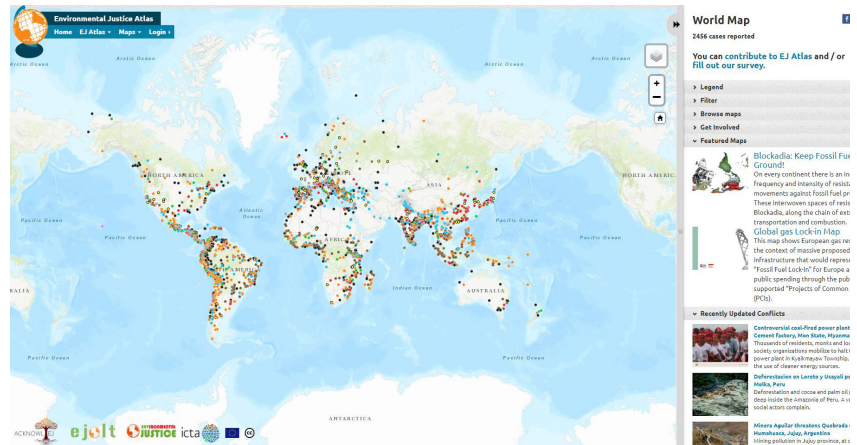
OVER OF FOOD EATEN IN EUROPE IS GROWN ON OTHER CONTINENTS 40%

## CASE STUDY

Environmental defenders need protection and one way to help with that is by giving them international media exposure which makes it harder for local actors to attack them. The Environmental Justice Atlas is a project that collects information about the often invisible environmental conflicts taking place around the world. 2500 environmental conflicts have been mapped and the atlas shows a clear link between the rise in extraction and trade of minerals and the rise in conflicts.

When the case of an Albanian minority in Montenegro resisting the creation of a new landfill on one of their historical sites was published in the online atlas, local and European media picked up the story and as a result the unlawfully jailed leader of the community was released.

<https://ejatlas.org/>



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recognise environmental discrimination in EU and global policies.
- For a post-growth strategy towards both environmental sustainability and more equality we need alternative indicators to GDP such as the Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI). The EU's Beyond GDP Initiative should be at the top of political agendas. Poverty in rich countries and especially in Europe rose even while GDP grew in the same period. There is no longer a clear relation between productivity growth and poverty reduction.
- Proper implementation of the Aarhus Convention will give environmental defenders better access to justice in the EU. EU leaders also need to act more firmly against criminalisation of environmental activism around the world as well as in some EU member states.
- An Alternative Trade Mandate and a binding regulation on harmful cross-border business practices, including sanctions, are essential for reducing material flows and moving towards a circular and more local economy.



### WHO WE ARE

We are 25 NGOs from across Europe working on social issues, supporting farmers, stopping climate change, protecting the environment, defending women's rights, young people, & gender equality, supporting fair trade, development, global justice, & workers' rights.

[makeeurope sustainableforall.org](https://makeeurope sustainableforall.org)

#FightInequalities

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