

ANNUAL REPORT 2025





**We are Europe's largest network of environmental citizens' organisations.
We bring together over 190 civil society organisations from 41 countries.
Together, we work for a better future where people and nature thrive together.**

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INTRODUCTION TO EEB'S ANNUAL REPORT 2025

By **Patrick ten Brink** and **Patrizia Heidegger**

As we look back on the past year, 2025, we do so in an increasingly difficult context for environmental action. Too often, we saw steps backwards and missed opportunities, rather than the progress that is so urgently needed. In the name of 'simplification', 'competitiveness' or 'security', strong political forces sought to roll back key protections or to stall the development of a stronger legal framework – despite the evidence being so clear. Rules protect the environment, the climate, our life-support systems, our health, and future generations. Rules drive innovations across societies and economies, making us more resilient, independent and sustainable in the long term.

In 2025, multiple forces led systematic attacks against environmental, social and human rights protections, the European Green Deal, as well as those in civil society advocating for rules that protect, weakening the EU's commitments and attempting to muzzle independent voices promoting progressive agendas. In a polarised political discourse, climate and environmental disinformation has pushed, amongst others, narratives opposing green transitions while aligning with fossil fuel industry interests. Climate and environmental protections have been framed as elitist or anti-freedom, when facts speak otherwise: our freedom is eroded due to fossil fuel dependence, and those with the lowest incomes are hit first by energy crises, by extreme weather events or air pollution.

Foreign interference and disinformation by US and Russian forces fuelled anti-regulatory ideology and anti-EU sentiment. Together with short-term business profit motives, they sought to sideline science, citizens' voices, and commitments to protect people's health, climate, and the environment, thereby rendering the EU less resilient to oil price shocks and political attacks. The forces also sought to weaken European democracies and the European project itself.

Yet, beyond the scale of the challenges, what has stood out the most to us is the strength of the community that has come together in response. We have seen remarkable solidarity from our donors, from partners across civil society both within and beyond the environmental movement, and decision-makers who, even in this period, have shown renewed determination to resist rollbacks, engage with civil society organisations (CSOs), and ensure that civil society voices continue to be heard. This collective commitment has been a powerful reminder of why our work matters, and of the resilience of the movement we are part of.

There was also good news on the policy development front in 2025 – the first-ever European soil law was agreed, a new water resilience strategy was published, implementation of nature and water laws progressed, green and affordable eco-labelled products were booming, and air quality continued to improve.

For the past year, we in the EEB Secretariat, with our members and partners, have been very active trying to right the wrongs of the disinformation drives, push for scientific, fact-based decision-making that also takes the realities, rights and voices of people, households and communities into account. While this report highlights activities across areas, we'd like to highlight a few to illustrate that progress is possible, and underline how important various partners and decision-makers are in this crucial moment of history:

> **Being invited to the informal meetings of environmental ministers by the Polish and Danish presidencies is a best practice for engaging civil society meaningfully, for which we are grateful.**

We thank the Polish presidency for its priority on disinformation and its work on revealing the scale of Russian funding behind it. We thank the Danish presidency for enabling us to support 24 leaders from 19 countries in taking PFAS blood tests, underscoring the importance of scientific evidence and personal conviction.

> **The engagements with the many partners and the press in responding to the disinformation-fuelled attacks on civil society.** The truth came out: they were politically driven attacks to weaken progressive voices and undermine protective regulations.

> **The many decision-makers – in the Commission, Parliament and Council - who stood their ground against intense corporate lobbying,** enabling the EU to secure an agreement to continue climate action beyond 2030, maintaining its commitment to climate neutrality for 2050, enabling the first ever European soil law to come onto the books, those in the Parliament engaged in the positive vote in the European Parliament's plenary vote in May and the Commissioner's statements confirmed the importance of civil society to democracy, and for the Commission's EU Civil Society Strategy & Democracy Shield.

We'd also like to thank all of our colleagues at the EEB Secretariat, our 190+ members, many supporters and partners, and the public for making our voices heard and sharing your voices. We look forward to continuing to work together to make the difference we need - by advocating for progressive policies to create a better environment in the European Union and beyond, for the respect of our values of democracy, fairness, respect, integrity and sustainability, and by striving towards a better future we know can happen - where people and nature thrive together.



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ABOUT THE EEB & OUR STRATEGIC APPROACH

The European Environmental Bureau (EEB) is the largest network of environmental citizens' organisations in Europe. It currently consists of over 190 member organisations in 41 countries, including a growing number of networks, and represents some 30 million individual members and supporters.

The EEB and its members share a common mission to advocate for progressive environmental policies while ensuring social justice and democratic decision-making in the EU and beyond, and a vision of a future in which people and nature thrive together.

For over five decades, the EEB has played a central role in shaping environmental policy and debate within Europe. Through regular high-level dialogue with institutional representatives, participation in expert groups, expertise on EU legislative processes and invitations to formal and informal policymaking spaces, we are recognised as a trusted representative of civil society interests at the heart of EU governance. Beyond Brussels and across the wider environmental community, the EEB is also acknowledged to be a constructive yet uncompromising advocate for science-based and democratic policymaking. This credibility stems not only from the vision the EEB represents, but also from how it operates.

The EEB's diverse membership brings together everything from local NGOs and national federations to European networks and a wide range of grassroots organisations. Driven and shaped by our members, we equip our network for effective advocacy and draw on their experience and expertise via our thematic [Working Groups](#) and our [Council](#) to translate local realities into EU-

level demands. Together, we shape a more coherent, influential, and democratically legitimate environmental movement.

The EEB is also the only European umbrella network that covers such a large number of environmental policy issues. This breadth complements our policy-specific work and puts us in a unique position to connect the dots across policies and lead on cross-cutting themes, such as sustainable development, good governance, participatory democracy, and the rule of law. Beyond our thematic expertise, we have also specialised in strategic communications, turning complex EU decision-making processes into clear, compelling messages for policymakers, media and the wider public, reaching and informing audiences beyond our traditional community.

While the EEB's core focus is the EU environmental agenda, our holistic perspective allows us to bridge environmental and social justice agendas. This positions the EEB to influence flagship initiatives such as the European Green Deal with greater authority and coherence, while also contributing meaningfully to regional and global processes, notably within the frameworks of the United Nations and the OECD.

Altogether, the EEB combines policy expertise, unique access to decision-making fora, an extensive network of members and partners, and strategic communications to transform the movement's collective effort into sustained policy influence. In doing so, we help ensure that policymaking in Europe and beyond keeps people and planet at its core, working towards a future in which both can thrive together.

EEB'S IMPACT IN 2025

In 2025, the EEB delivered impact where it matters most: shaping political decisions, defending democratic space, and scaling public engagement across Europe and beyond. In an increasingly contested environment, we combined high-level access, coalition power and digital reach to ensure that environmental priorities remained firmly on the agenda – and that civil society continued to have a seat at the table.



Ensuring civil society's presence at the highest political level

The EEB maintained unique institutional access by representing civil society at informal meetings of Environment and Agriculture Ministers under successive Council Presidencies.

Across meetings in Warsaw, Aalborg and Copenhagen, we brought evidence-based analysis directly into political discussions – addressing disinformation, resisting deregulation under the guise of “simplification”, and advocating for a fair and sustainable transition in the agri-food sector.

At the highest level, under our presidency of the Green 10, we met with Ursula von der Leyen to set out clear expectations: a just green transition, strong support for civil society, resistance to deregulation, and an ambitious EU budget aligned with environmental priorities.

Shaping global and EU decision-making

The EEB reinforced its role as a trusted convener and policy influencer at both global and EU levels. We helped shape civil society engagement ahead of the 7th UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-7), aligning diverse stakeholders – from NGOs to scientists and Indigenous groups – around shared advocacy priorities.

In Brussels, we created space for high-level political dialogue at a critical time for EU environmental ambition. Through strategic convenings with EU Presidencies, ministers, senior officials and European Commission representatives engaged directly with civil society on issues ranging from deregulation pressures to climate adaptation and pollution.

We also contributed to key expert processes, including the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of Agriculture, ensuring that environmental and public-interest perspectives were reflected in debates often dominated by sectoral interests.

Defending democratic space

As attacks on NGOs intensified in 2025, the EEB played a central role in defending civil society. Through targeted media engagement and political outreach, we exposed the motivations behind these attacks and supported a fact-based response across EU institutions.

This contributed to a European Parliament position reaffirming that NGO funding and advocacy are lawful, transparent and essential – helping to safeguard the role of independent voices in EU democracy.

Mobilising public support at scale

Together with partners, we demonstrated our ability to rapidly mobilise citizens and shape public debate through the [#HandsOffNature campaign](#). In just 10 days, nearly 200,000 people took action, generating over 50 million organic views and reaching an estimated 57.5 million people across Europe.

This level of engagement sends a clear political signal that public support for environmental protection remains strong – even in a challenging political context.

Holding decision-makers to account

In a volatile policy environment, we strengthened our watchdog role through our [Transformation Tracker](#). Covering 16 policy areas under the [European Pact for the Future](#) (supported by 400+ organisations), it provides a clear, evidence-based assessment of progress, setbacks and missed opportunities.

By equipping policymakers, partners and funders with actionable insights, we help ensure that ambition is not only set – but delivered.

Presidency Papers

At the start of each EU Council Presidency, we publish a Presidency Memorandum outlining key environmental priorities and ‘10 Green Tests’ for the incoming government, followed by an assessment of progress at the end of the term.

In 2025, the EEB’s input for the [Polish](#) and [Danish](#) Presidencies helped inform political discussions at the highest level, including through invitations as the only environmental NGO to both informal Environment Councils of EU ministers.

EU Council Presidency Papers 2025



[10 Green Tests: Poland](#)



[Assessment: Poland](#)



[10 Green Tests: Denmark](#)



[Assessment: Denmark](#)



CHALLENGES AND LEARNINGS OF 2025

2025 was a challenging year. Just days into it, Donald Trump began his second term as President of the United States, quickly intervening in European affairs, weaponising trade and using “competitiveness” arguments to justify the dismantling of environmental and social protections. This included stepping back from global climate and environmental commitments, cutting support for renewable energy, increasing fossil fuel extraction, and moving the country closer to an aggressive petrostate model – prompting many observers to conclude that “the US is no longer an ally of Europe.”

Meanwhile, Vladimir Putin’s illegal aggression against Ukraine continued to devastate the country and undermine its sovereignty, while disinformation spread widely, fuelling political interference, polarisation and climate denial.

Within the EU, this period saw intensified attacks on NGO funding and democratic safeguards, including efforts to institutionalise such scrutiny through dedicated working structures. At the same time, a broader rollback agenda targeting the European Green Deal and the environmental acquis accelerated, with no fewer than ten Omnibus proposals tabled despite warnings from experts, civil society organisations and many businesses. The European Ombudsman found maladministration in the Commission’s handling of key Omnibus procedures related to corporate sustainability, due diligence and the Common Agricultural Policy.

At the same time, the real-world consequences of decades of scientific warnings became increasingly visible. Europe and beyond experienced severe floods, storms, heatwaves, droughts and wildfires, alongside worsening pollution, mounting health impacts and accelerating biodiversity loss. The PFAS pollution scandal further exposed the scale of environmental and economic damage linked to “forever chemicals”, amplified by coordinated disinformation campaigns.

This urgency was underscored by the European Environment Agency’s flagship 2025 report, Europe’s environment and climate: knowledge for resilience, prosperity and sustainability, which confirmed continued deterioration across biodiversity, ecosystems, soil and climate resilience. The report found the EU off track on most 2030 targets, including biodiversity, soil health, carbon removal, water quality, pollution, human health, waste, material consumption and circularity.

The year also saw the Polish and Danish Presidencies of the EU play a notable role in addressing these challenges. Poland placed disinformation high on the agenda of its informal meeting of environment ministers in Warsaw. Denmark, in turn, highlighted the human dimension of pollution by encouraging leaders to undertake blood tests for PFAS – the “forever chemicals” found in human blood – making the scale and immediacy of the issue tangible for decision-makers.



COMMUNICATIONS, ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

What worked

In 2025, we significantly strengthened our reach and influence, with over 110 million organic impressions and 14 million engagements across our digital platforms – an 18-fold increase over the previous year. This growth reflects a deliberate shift towards audience-focused, evidence-based communications, grounded in a stronger understanding of how environmental issues are framed and contested across Europe.

Our “Becoming an Influencer” strategy – particularly on [TikTok](#) and [Instagram](#) – enabled us to move beyond the traditional Brussels policy audience and engage broader publics at scale. At the same time, we consolidated our position on more policy-oriented channels like [LinkedIn](#), ranking among the top peer environmental organisations for growth and engagement, and reinforcing our credibility with policymakers, experts and media. We also expanded our presence to other platforms to engage politically active and media-adjacent audiences.

This momentum was matched by strong performance in press and editorial outreach. Our media coverage reached an estimated *potential* audience of 8.7 billion, underscoring the scale and visibility of our media footprint across leading outlets, including Politico, Financial Times, The Guardian, Forbes, El País and Le Monde. Our flagship weekly newsletter, [New Leaf](#), grew to over 31,000 subscribers, was read more than 350,000 times, and has become a key agenda-setting tool, with content increasingly picked up directly by national media.

Challenges

Communicating science-based policy now requires navigating an increasingly complex and adversarial landscape. Social media ecosystems reward polarising content, while misleading narratives around climate, nature and public health continue to shape debate and erode trust.

At the same time, environmental action is more contested within EU policymaking. Shifting political dynamics and sustained lobbying from vested interests are putting pressure on existing protections and narrowing the space for evidence-based decision-making. Civil society is also increasingly targeted, with efforts to question its legitimacy and reduce its influence.

In this context, communications cannot be treated as a supporting function but a core strategic tool – essential to reaching institutional audiences and beyond, countering misleading narratives and safeguarding democratic space.

What's needed next

In 2026, our focus is to deepen and further scale what has proven to work. This means consolidating our smart communications approach across the organisation and network, strengthening the link between policy expertise, narrative framing, audience insight and digital delivery.

We will continue to grow and refine our platforms and editorial products, while strengthening narrative intelligence to better anticipate and respond to emerging debates. A key priority is to reinforce our network role – aligning narratives and working with trusted messengers to amplify credible, evidence-based voices across Europe.

In an environment shaped by disinformation and polarisation, this approach enables us to strengthen influence – ensuring that evidence-based narratives remain visible, credible and resilient in public and political debate.

2025 IN NUMBERS

(+ Equivalent populations in countries, cities and comparisons)

Social Media

Impressions: 110 million

Germany 🇩🇪 + Ukraine 🇺🇦 = 113 million

Engagements: 14 million

Sweden 🇸🇪 + Croatia 🇭🇷 = 14 million

Followers: 261.000

Venice 🇮🇹 or Ljubljana 🇸🇮 = 300.000

New followers in 2025: 114.000

That's a 77% increase in one year! 📈

Press & Newsletter

Media footprint : 8.7 billion

Estimated global population: 8.3 billion 🌍

Media hits: 2,851

That's 233 media hits a month! ⭐

New Leaf newsletter reads: 358.000

Nice 🇫🇷 or Bilbao 🇪🇸 = 350.000

New Leaf subscribers: 31.000

An audience shaping environmental policy across Europe

Want to know more?

Drop us a line at press@eeb.org or newleaf@eeb.org, or visit eeb.org.

Check out our accounts and profiles by scanning the QR code ->

Scan me



EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS & GOVERNANCE

What worked

Despite a highly challenging year marked by escalating geopolitical turbulence, the EEB and its allies delivered tangible impact. The start of Donald Trump's second term brought renewed pressure on Europe, including trade weaponisation and a rollback of environmental and social protections. In this context, the EEB helped expose backtracking on climate and environment, contributed to securing ambitious Council conclusions under the Danish Presidency on Europe's Environment 2030, and resisted repeated attempts to restrict civil society space.

Through coordinated press and advocacy work, we brought increased visibility to the deregulation agenda and mobilised close to 200,000 citizens in response to attempts to weaken environmental legislation under the Environment Omnibus. At the same time, the Danish EU Council Presidency demonstrated leadership by recognising the EU's insufficient progress towards the objectives of the 8th Environment Action Programme, the critical state of biodiversity, and the interlinkages between climate resilience, circularity and environmental protection. Importantly, Member States reaffirmed that "simplification" should not lower standards, and called for continued ambition beyond 2025.

We also saw important institutional recognition of civil society's role. The Commissioner for Budget clarified that no irregularities had occurred in LIFE operating grants, while a European Parliament plenary vote in May reaffirmed both the legality of NGO funding and the importance of civil society for democratic accountability.

Challenges

Following the European elections, the political balance in the European Parliament shifted, with the erosion of the cordon sanitaire becoming evident during the first Omnibus negotiations.

A broader deregulation agenda emerged under the new Commission mandate, framed under "simplification". Within a year, ten Omnibus packages were tabled using accelerated procedures that bypassed evidence-based and transparent policymaking, limited impact assessments and stakeholder consultation, and risk weakening environmental, health and social protections. At the same time, foreign and corporate interests increasingly shaped EU policy debates, adding further pressure on regulatory standards.

What's needed next

Looking ahead, the priority is to consolidate and defend an independent EU policy agenda that resists both foreign and corporate interference. This requires halting the current deregulation trajectory and restoring science-based, inclusive and participatory decision-making processes.

At the same time, the EU must reaffirm its commitment to environmental and social protections, while advancing broader priorities such as gender equality and societal resilience. The vision set out in the European Pact for the Future – supported by over 400 organisations – remains a relevant and credible pathway, calling for a green and social deal grounded in a one-planet economy.

In this context, sustained public engagement will be critical. Ensuring that the transition respects people's wellbeing and rights is not only a matter of fairness, but a condition for maintaining public support and avoiding backlash.



GLOBAL AND REGIONAL POLICIES

What worked

2025 was an important year for the EEB's global and regional advocacy, with our work around the 7th UN Environment Assembly standing out. We coordinated regional and international civil society consultations, brought a focused delegation to Nairobi, and helped shape the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum, ensuring strong and coordinated civil society participation.

Our role as Regional Facilitator in the United Nations Environment Programme process, alongside engagement in over 20 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development dialogues, strengthened the link between EU-level priorities of environmental civil society and global environmental governance.

In support of our members in Ukraine, we provided a platform for civil society voices and hosted the Ukrainian Environment Minister during European Green Week, calling for a green and just recovery of the country.

In a rapidly shifting geopolitical context, we also expanded into new areas of work, adopting our first position on security, defence and militarisation. At the same time, we continued to mobilise and speak out against violations of fundamental human and humanitarian rights and the destruction of life, including in Gaza.

Challenges

The global landscape for environmental multilateralism became more difficult in 2025. Major actors stepped back from leadership, petro-states slowed progress, and UN bodies as well as environmental and development NGOs faced significant funding cuts.

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In this context, the EEB's role as a stable and trusted convener became even more important to ensure that civil society voices remained present and coordinated in key global processes. Despite these headwinds, we continued to push for ambitious outcomes at UNEA-7 and across OECD forums, emphasising the need for strong European environmental leadership.

At the same time, our resources to support members in EU candidate countries and the wider neighbourhood, and to engage more systematically on the intersection between environmental policy and geopolitics, conflict and militarisation, remained limited relative to the scale of the challenges.

What's needed next

Civil society engagement in global and regional policymaking is expected to remain under pressure, with shrinking civic space and limited political ambition slowing progress towards the 2030 Agenda. At the same time, 2025 demonstrated clear opportunities to counter this trend.

Building on this momentum, we will deepen our engagement in EU candidate countries and expand our network of partners, while strengthening coordination and joint advocacy at global level. A key priority will be to reinforce partnerships that can help drive renewed political commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

By working across sectors and regions, we aim to strengthen the enabling environment for civil society and accelerate progress towards global environmental and social objectives.



ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND JUSTICE

What worked

In the face of democratic backsliding across Europe, the Environmental Law and Justice team strengthened its role in advancing environmental rights and supporting those defending our planet. By building alliances and fostering collective action, we helped keep environmental democracy high on the EU agenda.

A key milestone was the launch of the Democracy for Transition (D4T) Coalition, bringing together environmental and democracy organisations to address the twin challenges of climate change and democratic disillusion. The coalition quickly generated momentum, contributing coordinated input to key EU initiatives such as the Civil Society Strategy and Democracy Shield, alongside joint advocacy and public-facing campaigns.

We also made progress in empowering environmental defenders, particularly young people. Through the [BeLIFE project](#), we delivered trainings across Europe in local languages and launched an online complaints support portal to help individuals navigate environmental harms and access justice. In parallel, our engagement with the Coalition Against SLAPPs in Europe (CASE) strengthened efforts to highlight the impact of SLAPPs on environmental actors and supported advocacy for stronger protections.

Challenges

The year was marked by a continued weakening of environmental protections alongside a broader erosion of procedural rights, with citizens and civil society increasingly excluded from decision-making processes under the justification of “urgency”.

At the same time, hostile narratives promoted by far-right and right-wing actors increasingly targeted environmental organisations and defenders, contributing to funding cuts, legal restrictions and instances of repression.

At the international level, declining respect for legal obligations – including developments under the Aarhus Convention – points to growing fragmentation and weakening multilateralism, creating a more challenging environment for advancing environmental rights.

What's needed next

Reinforcing environmental democracy must remain a priority. This includes safeguarding procedural rights, ensuring meaningful public participation and upholding access to justice in environmental matters.

Stronger and more consistent support for civil society and environmental defenders will be essential, alongside clearer recognition of their role in protecting the public interest.

At the same time, efforts should focus on restoring a positive, forward-looking narrative around environmental rights and democratic participation, while strengthening the implementation of existing frameworks, including the Aarhus Convention.



ECONOMIC TRANSITION

What worked

2025 delivered important progress in the EEB's work on economic transition, with tangible impact on EU debates around fair taxation and raw materials. A key achievement was helping to elevate progressive taxation – particularly wealth taxation – on the EU political agenda. Momentum moved beyond national discussions and began to take shape at EU level, reflected in a European Parliament hearing on taxing ultra-wealthy individuals and the European Commission's forthcoming work on wealth taxation.

The EEB also strengthened its position as a leading civil society voice on raw materials, industrial policy and economic transition through its engagement in the EU Raw Materials Coalition. This enabled stronger alignment among stakeholders and helped bring justice, environmental safeguards and planetary boundaries more firmly into debates often dominated by extraction and competitiveness narratives. Our strong presence at EU Raw Materials Week 2025 – including participation in multiple panels and the organisation of a parallel civil society programme – increased both policy visibility and public engagement.

Beyond policy processes, the EEB contributed to shaping public debate by challenging dominant economic narratives. Strong engagement on social media, particularly around wealth taxation, highlighted growing public support for linking fairness, redistribution and sustainability. This reinforced the case for progressive taxation as a key tool for financing a just transition.

Challenges

Despite this progress, 2025 also exposed the limits of civil society influence in an increasingly constrained political environment. The selection of Strategic Projects under the Critical Raw Materials Act was characterised by limited transparency, restricted access to information and insufficient scrutiny, reducing the impact of civil society input on final decisions.

At the same time, EU priorities shifted further towards competitiveness, economic security, deregulation and defence. This narrowed the space for civil society engagement and sidelined more transformative visions of a social deal for a one-planet economy. Environmental and social safeguards came under increasing pressure, while political ambition to finance a just transition lagged behind expanding flexibility for defence spending. A more hostile climate for post-growth approaches, combined with a broader neoliberal shift and gender backlash, further constrained progressive alternatives.

What's needed next

Looking ahead, strengthening the EU's fiscal capacity and public investment will be essential to finance the transition and critical infrastructure, framed not only as an economic priority but also as a matter of security and resilience. The EEB will continue to promote progressive EU own resources – including wealth taxes and windfall profit taxes – as key tools to reduce inequalities and support a fair transition.

On raw materials, earlier and more structured civil society engagement will be critical. This includes pushing for greater transparency, stronger governance and robust environmental and social safeguards in future Strategic Projects.

At the same time, demand reduction, resource efficiency and sufficiency must remain central to the EU's economic model. Strengthening coordination across civil society and trade unions will be key to moving from reactive advocacy to a more proactive political strategy. Reframing the debate around prosperity and resilience – grounded in justice, democracy and ecological limits – will be essential to counter deregulation and build support for a fair, one-planet economy.



NATURE

What worked

In 2025, the EEB played a decisive role in keeping nature, water and pollution at the centre of the EU agenda at a time when environmental protections were increasingly under pressure from vested interests and shifting political dynamics. We provided the evidence, coordination and public mobilisation needed to defend key laws.

A major milestone was the launch of the [#HandsOffNature campaign](#) in September together with partner organisations. The campaign brought NGOs, citizens and progressive businesses behind a common message: Europe must not weaken nature laws for the profit of a few. In just 10 days, nearly 200,000 citizens responded to the European Commission's call for evidence, helping secure the exclusion of the Nature Restoration Law from the Environment Omnibus. Within three months, the campaign generated hundreds of media mentions across Europe, reaching an estimated 57.5 million people, while EEB social media content achieved over 50 million organic views. The campaign has since gained recognition across EU-level coalitions, leading to invitations to share our approach and support partners.

We also continued to play a leading policy role. The EU adopted its first law on soil protection and reached an agreement on updating the list of priority water pollutants, despite sustained opposition. Throughout these processes, we provided technical expertise, evidence and strategic advocacy. We also contributed to the development of the EU Water Resilience Strategy and supported implementation of existing legislation, including through guidance and NGO-led assessments of the Nature Restoration Law.

Challenges

At the same time, the political context for nature protection became more challenging. Shifting majorities, geopolitical pressures and intensive lobbying increasingly framed environmental safeguards as being in conflict with economic security and societal needs, despite the central role of healthy ecosystems in resilience and public wellbeing.

Several developments already had tangible consequences. Proposed changes to the Deforestation Regulation risk weakening the law, new permitting rules reduced environmental safeguards, the protection status of the wolf was downgraded, and the Commission committed to revising the Water Framework Directive in ways that could allow increased pollution from mining, setting a concerning precedent.

These trends suggest that recent wins – such as the exclusion of certain nature laws from the deregulation agenda – are likely to be fragile and require sustained, proactive engagement.

What's needed next

These developments underline the importance of continued, coordinated action. In 2026, we will build on the success of #HandsOffNature by scaling the campaign, deepening partnerships beyond the NGO sector and strengthening links between nature, health and security. By early 2026, the campaign had already gathered close to 400,000 signatures across 100 partner organisations in 23 countries, demonstrating its growing reach and credibility.

Nature remains a powerful and unifying issue. Building on this momentum, we will further develop a positive and widely shared narrative around nature resilience, while maintaining the capacity to respond rapidly to [emerging threats](#). Strengthening this combination of proactive storytelling and coordinated advocacy will be key to safeguarding and advancing nature protection in the years ahead.



AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

What worked

Following the conclusion of the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of Agriculture, the EEB joined the European Board on Agriculture and Food (EBAF) in 2025 – an expert advisory group established to follow up on the Dialogue’s recommendations. This provided an important entry point to represent civil society in high-level discussions and ensure that evidence-based perspectives reflecting the needs of both people and nature were present in shaping the future of EU food and farming.

In September, the EEB also contributed to the informal meeting of EU Ministers of Agriculture, bringing civil society perspectives directly into ministerial discussions and calling for stronger support for farmers in the transition to more sustainable practices that benefit both livelihoods and the wider public.

Challenges

Despite this engagement, the overall policy direction remained challenging. While the EEB committed to the EBAF process, the spirit of the Strategic Dialogue – based on balanced representation and consensus-building – was not fully reflected in its structure. A shift towards stronger representation of agri-industry interests risks reducing the space for consensus-based outcomes.

This shift was also reflected in the European Commission’s approach. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) proposal published in July did not reflect the level of ambition outlined in the Dialogue, and falls short of providing the clear direction needed to accelerate the transition towards fairer and more sustainable farming systems.

At the same time, the continued “simplification” of the CAP led to a weakening of key environmental safeguards. In November 2025, the European Ombudsman found maladministration in the Commission’s rollback of environmental and human rights protections. Despite this, a second round of simplification (Omnibus III) proceeded using similar “urgency” arguments. While the Council resisted further weakening proposed by the European Parliament, both rounds resulted in a significant erosion of safeguards.

The removal of protections for sensitive ecosystems such as wetlands and peatlands is particularly concerning, as it undermines biodiversity, carbon storage and water regulation, while ultimately affecting the long-term sustainability of farming systems.

What’s needed next

Looking ahead, key policy opportunities will be critical to steer the transition in a more sustainable direction. The upcoming EU Livestock Strategy has the potential to support farmers in moving towards more sustainable, healthy and ethical practices, including agroecological approaches, better alignment of livestock numbers with natural resources, and stronger integration of animal welfare into farming systems.

The revision of the EU Procurement Directives also presents an opportunity to promote sustainable food systems by directing public spending towards local, seasonal and environmentally sustainable food in schools, hospitals and public institutions. If effectively designed, these measures can better align environmental objectives with farmers’ livelihoods.

In parallel, the EEB has launched a new workstream on nitrogen pollution – a cross-cutting issue linking agriculture, water and air quality. This work will strengthen collaboration across teams and help bring the impacts of nitrogen pollution closer to communities at both EU and national level, supporting more integrated and systemic policy responses.



CIRCULAR ECONOMY

What worked

In 2025, the EEB played a key role in keeping circularity high on the EU agenda and shaping important legislative outcomes. After years of advocacy, co-legislators agreed on a targeted revision of the Waste Framework Directive, introducing the EU's first binding food waste reduction targets for 2030 and mandatory Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes for textiles from 2028. Both outcomes were informed by our technical expertise and coalition-building across the textile and food sectors.

Our sustained engagement on the new Directive on vehicle design and end-of-life management also contributed to measures aimed at improving circularity in the automotive sector. Beyond legislative work, we continued to support the EU Ecolabel through technical input and communications, with the scheme now covering nearly 110,000 products – reflecting growing uptake among businesses offering more sustainable choices.

We also strengthened the link between environmental and social priorities, particularly in the housing debate, by bringing together diverse stakeholders around the cost-of-living crisis. Through active participation in key platforms such as the Ecodesign Forum and the Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform, and through alliances including Rethink Plastic, the Right to Repair network, the Wardrobe Change and Whole Life Carbon campaigns, as well as industry–civil society collaborations on electronic waste and vehicles, we reinforced our position as a trusted and credible voice on circular economy across institutions, industry and civil society.

Challenges

Despite this progress, the transition to a genuinely circular economy remains highly contested. The proposed Circular Economy Act risks focusing primarily on recycling, without sufficiently addressing systemic challenges such as overproduction, overconsumption and dependence on virgin material extraction. The EEB has consistently raised these concerns, often in the face of significant political and industry pressure.

Similarly, initiatives such as RESourceEU have prioritised securing primary raw materials over demand reduction, while the Bioeconomy Strategy risks increasing reliance on biomass imports without adequately promoting sustainable material use.

On product policy, slow implementation timelines under the Ecodesign and Construction Products frameworks risk delaying much-needed transformation. At the same time, stalled negotiations on the Green Claims Directive and fast-tracked legislative processes lacking robust impact assessments signal a more challenging policy environment ahead.

What's needed next

Building on the momentum of 2025, the EEB will continue to advocate for a Circular Economy Act that delivers meaningful systemic change. This includes prioritising waste prevention, reuse and repair over recycling, establishing binding targets for reducing resource use, and addressing overconsumption and harmful material cycles.

We will continue to mobilise members, businesses and civil society partners to strengthen the ambition of upcoming legislation, while tackling the growing challenge of illegal, unsafe and non-compliant products entering the EU market through online platforms.

Across all these areas, stronger cross-team collaboration – linking circular economy with zero pollution, chemicals and economic transition – will be key to demonstrating that circularity is not only an environmental priority, but also a cornerstone of Europe's long-term industrial resilience and strategic autonomy.



ENERGY AND CLIMATE

What worked

Against a challenging political backdrop, 2025 proved to be a year of resilience for Europe's climate agenda. The EU maintained its overall direction, reaffirming its commitment to climate action beyond 2030 and setting a clear trajectory with its 2040 targets. In the near term, national climate and energy plans indicate that Member States are broadly on track to meet 2030 targets on renewables and emissions.

In this context, the EEB focused on ensuring that the transition remains both ambitious and socially grounded. We contributed to shaping Social Climate Plans to better support households in the transition, and advocated for renewable energy deployment models that benefit and involve local communities. More broadly, our work helped reinforce the link between climate ambition and social fairness, ensuring that policies respond to people's everyday realities as well as long-term targets.

At the same time, momentum continued to build across key sectors, including renewables, heat pumps and electric vehicles. While challenges remain, these developments signal that the transition is underway and can be accelerated with the right policy framework.

Challenges

Despite this progress, the climate policy landscape remains fragile. The EU's 2040 target, while politically important, falls short of the level of domestic emissions reductions recommended by scientific advisors.

At the same time, elements of the 2030 framework have been weakened. This includes the delay in introducing carbon pricing for transport and buildings (ETS2) and the softening of CO₂ standards for cars. More broadly, political compromises have increasingly relied on delays, flexibility and loopholes.

These trends risk undermining effective implementation. By shifting responsibility to national level, they increase the likelihood of uneven progress and gaps in delivery. While the overall direction of travel remains intact, the policy framework is being stretched at a moment when it needs to be reinforced.

What's needed next

Europe already has the tools to deliver a fossil-free future, including renewable energy, electrification and building renovation. The priority now is to ensure consistent and robust implementation at scale.

The EEB will continue to advocate for maintaining and strengthening ambition across the energy transition. With 2030 approaching, key elements of the Fit-for-55 package must be fully implemented rather than reopened under the banner of "simplification".

We will continue to promote a 100% renewable energy system, while supporting policy frameworks that make fossil-free living accessible and affordable. Ensuring that the transition delivers tangible benefits for households and communities will be essential to sustaining public support and turning decarbonisation into a durable European success.



ZERO POLLUTION INDUSTRY

What worked

2025 confirmed the return of active industrial policy in Europe. In this context, the EEB worked to keep zero pollution at the centre of the agenda, despite growing pressure to narrow the focus to competitiveness and decarbonisation alone.

Important progress was made. The revised Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) introduced a more forward-looking framework for industrial transformation, strengthening pollution prevention and tightening permitting conditions. It lays the groundwork for moving industry beyond compliance towards more systemic change.

At the same time, technical processes began to deliver tangible results. In the ongoing review of Best Available Techniques (BREFs), more ambitious approaches are emerging to address pollution at source, including PFAS emissions in sectors such as metal surface treatment, plastics and semiconductors. Preventing pollution at source remains one of the most effective ways to reduce long-term environmental and health impacts and to drive structural change in industrial systems.

Challenges

However, 2025 also highlighted growing inconsistencies in Europe's industrial policy approach. The Clean Industry Deal has relied heavily on incentives and subsidies, while placing less emphasis on the regulatory framework needed to drive transformation. At the same time, the Industrial Accelerator Act signals a shift towards a broader focus on competitiveness and lead markets, without a clear pathway for systemic change.

Alongside this, a stronger deregulatory trend has emerged. Through the Environment Omnibus package, key provisions of the Industrial Emissions Directive risk being weakened, including requirements for companies

to plan their transition and assess safer alternatives to hazardous chemicals. These are not marginal adjustments, but core safeguards that ensure accountability and real change.

Taken together, these developments risk sending mixed signals: encouraging investment in industrial transition on the one hand, while weakening the rules that ensure that transition delivers meaningful environmental outcomes on the other. This creates a risk of long-term lock-in to unsustainable production models.

What's needed next

Looking ahead, ensuring coherence between industrial ambition and regulatory frameworks will be critical. The EEB will continue to advocate for an integrated approach that tackles pollution at source, internalises environmental and health costs, and creates clear incentives for clean production. Defending and strengthening existing legislation will remain a central priority.

With the Environment Omnibus and the Industrial Accelerator Act entering key co-legislative phases, we will engage to ensure they support – rather than dilute – Europe's industrial transformation. The upcoming revision of the EU Public Procurement Directive also offers an important opportunity to drive demand for low-carbon and zero-pollution products, helping to scale clean industrial solutions.

At the same time, we will continue to engage in technical but critical processes such as the review of Best Available Techniques, where concrete standards are set and where ambition can translate into real-world impact. We will also work to safeguard the integrity of key climate instruments, including the EU Emissions Trading System and the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, ensuring they remain effective drivers of industrial transformation.

Across all these areas, our focus remains clear: to ensure that Europe's industrial transition is not only climate-neutral, but genuinely zero pollution and aligned with the public interest.



CHEMICALS

What worked

In 2025, the EEB focused on building a stronger and more connected network of citizens and stakeholders to increase pressure for a broad, universal restriction on PFAS.

A key achievement was a high-impact campaign highlighting the widespread human and economic impacts of PFAS pollution. Developed in the context of the Environment Council, the campaign combined media outreach, stakeholder engagement and a targeted biomonitoring initiative involving environment and climate ministers. By connecting policy discussions with real-world exposure, it helped increase visibility and public support for EU-wide restrictions.

We also strengthened civil society coordination by building coalitions of NGOs, affected communities, trade unions and social influencers advocating for stronger protections. In parallel, we continued technical and advocacy work within the European Chemicals Agency process, contributing to progress towards a comprehensive PFAS restriction.

Challenges

Despite this progress, regulatory uncertainty and broader deregulation pressures remain significant challenges. The revision of REACH was delayed in 2025, while the universal PFAS restriction is advancing slowly. Political discussions on industrial uses remain largely stalled, with progress focused mainly on consumer products.

This uncertainty affects both the level of ambition and the predictability of the EU chemicals framework, making it more difficult to plan effective advocacy and to address existing gaps in chemical safety.

At the same time, funding constraints have limited the capacity to sustain and scale activities, reducing the scope of implementation at a moment when increased engagement is needed.

What's needed next

Looking ahead, the focus will be on the expected political phase of the PFAS restriction process by the end of 2026, alongside preparations for the next European political cycle, when a renewed push for REACH reform is anticipated.

Momentum around PFAS is increasing, with the issue now firmly on the agenda across EU institutions and in public debate in several Member States. Key milestones include the final opinion of the European Chemicals Agency, followed by a European Commission proposal.

The EEB will continue to bridge the gap between the often invisible impacts of chemical pollution and public understanding. This includes supporting affected communities, increasing the visibility of health and environmental impacts, and building sustained momentum for stronger prevention and protection measures, with a particular focus on achieving a comprehensive PFAS restriction.



MERCURY

What worked

In 2025, the EEB, together with the Zero Mercury Working Group (ZMWG) – which it founded and has co-ordinated since 2005 – marked 20 years of international work on mercury. As the only global network dedicated entirely to this issue, the EEB/ZMWG has played a central role in strengthening the Minamata Convention on Mercury through policy input, capacity building and sustained engagement in international processes.

This long-term work delivered concrete results in 2025. Our positions were reflected in COP6 decisions, and our coordinated intersessional submissions were taken up in official reports. Notably, the EEB/ZMWG supported an African-led proposal that contributed to a COP6 decision on mercury-added cosmetics, strengthening enforcement of existing bans.

Our expertise and leadership on mercury-added cosmetics continue to be recognised by governments, UN agencies and NGOs. In 2025, this was reflected in invitations to contribute to international projects funded by the Global Environment Facility and led by the United Nations Environment Programme.

At EU level, our engagement also delivered impact. Through contributions to the evaluation of the Cosmetic Products Regulation, we highlighted loopholes in online sales of illegal mercury-added cosmetics. Key issues raised by the EEB were reflected in the provisional findings of the evaluation.

Challenges

Addressing the proliferation of illegal mercury-added cosmetics, particularly via online platforms, remains a significant challenge. While the Cosmetic Products Regulation has been under evaluation since 2022, the process has been complicated by parallel fast-track revisions under the Chemicals Omnibus.

Despite broad support – including from parts of industry – for clearer responsibilities for online platforms, progress remains slow. Continued and sustained advocacy is required to ensure that products sold online meet the same safety standards as those available on the EU market.

More broadly, ensuring coherence across related EU frameworks, including the Market Surveillance Regulation and the New Legislative Framework, remains critical to effectively address gaps in enforcement and platform accountability.

What's needed next

Looking ahead, the EEB will build on its EU-level work and further leverage this experience at the global level. Continued engagement on online platform liability, alongside partnerships with NGOs and industry actors, will be key to strengthening product safety and enforcement.

At the international level, strong momentum is building around mercury-added cosmetics. The EEB/ZMWG will continue to contribute to the Minamata Convention intersessional process by developing practical tools and supporting implementation, particularly in developing countries.

Preparation for COP7 will be a key priority, including efforts to strengthen controls on the trade of mercury-added compounds, which contribute to the production of illegal products. More broadly, the EEB/ZMWG will continue working to strengthen the Convention across priority areas, including products and processes, artisanal and small-scale gold mining, trade and effectiveness evaluation.



AIR QUALITY AND NOISE

What worked

Despite a challenging political environment, the EEB and its members continued to play an important role in advancing air quality policy in the EU and beyond in 2025. Building on strengthened capacity in recent years – including around the revised Ambient Air Quality Directive – the network remained a credible and authoritative voice at both EU and national level. Close cooperation with health experts and scientists further reinforced the evidence base and impact of our advocacy.

A key success was keeping public health at the centre of policy debates, particularly in discussions on major pollution sources such as agriculture and domestic heating. We also mobilised members and partners to engage in the revision of the UNECE Gothenburg Protocol, helping to maintain momentum on methane reduction and future emission cuts.

In addition, the EEB launched a study with Ricardo modelling the impact of ten key air quality measures. This work provided practical pathways for achieving compliance with the Ambient Air Quality Directive by 2030, while also highlighting important co-benefits, including reductions in noise pollution.

Challenges

The political space for environmental protection narrowed significantly in 2025. Deregulatory and right-wing actors increasingly sought to weaken the environmental acquis and discredit civil society, including in relation to air quality policy.

These challenges often emerged indirectly, through narratives not directly linked to air pollution – for example framing the Ambient Air Quality Directive as a barrier to affordable housing. At the same time, broader deregulatory initiatives, including the Environment Omnibus and the Food and Feed Additives Omnibus, risk undermining key legislation relevant to air quality.

Reduced funding for civil society further limited the capacity to respond effectively. Meanwhile, noise pollution remains a major environmental and public health issue, yet the revision of the Environmental Noise Directive has still not been prioritised, despite growing scientific evidence.

What's needed next

Looking ahead, stronger and more systematic collaboration with health experts will be essential to underpin advocacy with robust evidence and reinforce the public health case for action.

Greater visibility and responsiveness will also be critical. The EEB and its members must be able to respond quickly to emerging debates and policy risks, ensuring that health and environmental protection remain central in decision-making.

With adequate resources and coordination, civil society can continue to expose policy inconsistencies, counter misleading narratives and support the development of a more coherent and ambitious approach to air quality and noise across Europe.



ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Transparency about our work and finances is crucial; please see our independent auditor's report on our [About page](#). In 2025, the EEB maintained stable finances, with a turnover of **€7,882,818** supported by philanthropic foundations, the European Union, governments, international organisations and EEB members. Total expenditure amounted to **€7,837,371**, resulting in a surplus of **€45,447** and total reserves of **€332,245** at year-end.

Income	
Foundations	4,737,533€
European Union	1,812,568€
Organisations	507,898€
Membership fees	325,138€
Governments	280,810€
Other Income	218,871€
Total Income	7,882,818€

Expenditure	
EU Governance, Global Policies & Sustainability	988,956€
Nature, Health & Environment	2,436,206€
Climate, Circular Economy & Industry	1,853,748€
Core Communications	159,858€
Membership & Development	514,425€
Management & Governance	321,421€
Finance & Operations	833,510€
General Operating Costs	729,247€
Total Expenditure	7,837,371€

**The above amounts include staff costs, advocacy activities, events, communications, grants to partners, coalition work and other operational costs. Policy communications embedded within thematic policy areas.*



DONORS

The EEB could not do what it does without the generosity of its donors and partners. Through their support, the EEB continues to be a strong voice for environmental protection in the EU and beyond. The EEB gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the following donors for 2025:

European Union through the European Commission

- [DG Environment Service contracts](#)
- [DG Environment CINEA LIFE Programme](#), including via a project led by [Carbon Market Watch](#)
- [DG RTD Horizon Programme](#), including via projects led by [Fundacion Circe Centro de Investigation de Recursos y Consumos Energeticos \(CIRCE\)](#), [Forschungszentrum Julich gmbh \(JÜLICH\)](#), [European Network of Living Labs izvz \(ENOLL\)](#), [Soluciones Agrícolas Ecoinnovadoras \(SL\)](#), [Waterford Institute of Technology](#), [CIBIO Research Centre in Biodiversity and Genetic Resources](#), [Stichting OpenGeoHub](#)
- [DG IntPa](#) via a project led by the [United Nations Environment Programme \(UNEP\)](#)
- [DG IntPa](#) via a project led by [GOPA Worldwide Consultants GmbH](#)
- [DG Justice CERV Programme](#), including directly as well as via a project led by [Legambiente Nazionale APS](#)
- [European Education and Culture Executive Agency](#), led by [Legambiente Nazionale APS](#)
- [European Environment Agency \(EEA\)](#)

Governments

- [Belgian Federal Ministry of Mobility, Climate and Environmental Transition](#)
- [The Danish Ministry of the Environment & Gender Equality](#)
- [The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit \(GIZ\) GmbH direct and through projects led by Chatham House \(The Royal Institute of International Affairs\), ECOS and Green Liberty](#)
- [The Finnish Ministry of the Environment](#)
- [The Irish Government, through the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications \(DECC\)](#)
- [The German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety \(BMUKN\) via direct funding as well as channelled via EURENI, including through projects led by CHEM Trust and Environmental Action Germany \(DUH\)](#)
- [The German Environmental Agency \(UBA\)](#)
- [The Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment](#)
- [Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency \(SIDA\) channelled via The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation \(SSNC\)](#)
- [The Austrian Federal Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry, Climate and Environmental Protection, Regions and Water Management \(BMLUK\)](#)

Intergovernmental Organisations and Agencies

- [OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](#)
- [United Nations Environmental Programme \(UNEP\) directly, as well as channelled via the Biodiversity Research Institute](#)
- [World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](#)

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Foundations and other Organisations

- [Schmidt Family Foundation](#) via the [11th Hour Project](#)
- [Adessium Foundation](#)
- [Article 19](#)
- [Clean Air Fund \(CAF\)](#) directly as well as via [AirClim](#)
- [Charities Aid Foundation](#) via donor-advised funding
- [ClimateWorks Foundation](#)
- [Ecological Restoration Fund](#)
- [European Cultural Foundation](#)
- [Children's Investment Fund Foundation \(CIFF\)](#) via [Environmental Investigation Agency \(EIA UK\)](#)
- [European Climate Foundation \(ECF\)](#)
- [Fondation Hans Wilsdorf](#)
- [Global Methane Hub](#) through projects led by [Deutsche Umwelthilfe eV \(DUH\)](#) and [Windward Fund](#)
- [Heinrich-Boell-Stiftung](#)
- [Laudes Foundation](#) directly as well as via [Circle Economy Foundation](#)
- [Tiina and Antti Herlin Foundation \(TAH\)](#)
- [New Economics Foundation \(NEF\)](#)
- [Oak Foundation](#) via the [European Health Information Initiative \(EHII\)](#) and [BirdLife International](#)
- [PILnet](#)
- [Plastic Solutions Fund](#) via [Zero Waste Europe](#)
- [Sigrid Rausing Trust Foundation](#)
- [Tanka Foundation](#)
- [The Sunrise Project](#)
- [Tides Foundation](#)
- [Open Philanthropy Foundation](#)
- [Umweltdachverband \(UWD\)](#)



Want to have a real impact? Support Europe's largest network of environmental citizens' organisations!

At a time of growing pressure on democracy, science and environmental protections, the need for strong, independent civil society has never been greater. Through the support of foundations, donor-advised funds and philanthropic partners, the EEB continues to strengthen environmental advocacy, democratic participation and public-interest expertise across Europe and beyond.

With more than 190 member organisations in 41 countries, the EEB transforms collective expertise and grassroots experience into strategic policy influence at the highest political levels. By supporting the EEB, donors help equip Europe's environmental movement with the policy expertise, communications capacity and coalition-building needed to defend people and planet, counter disinformation, and advance a just and sustainable future.

Interested in learning more? Drop us a line at DevelopmentTeam@eeb.org

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

What worked

In 2025, the EEB strengthened its commitment to a healthy, modern and values-driven workplace. Continued investment in staff development, wellbeing and organisational culture contributed to low staff turnover, reflecting strong identification with the EEB's mission and a positive, collaborative working environment.

A key milestone was the adoption of a new Overtime Policy, designed to better manage workloads and support work-life balance. This was complemented by the rollout of a new time-tracking tool, developed in cooperation with staff representatives, streamlining time management, leave requests and administrative processes.

We also implemented our annual training plan, offering a broad programme including leadership training for team leads, wellbeing sessions, communications training, internal knowledge-sharing and individual coaching.

In addition, new Work Regulations were adopted following constructive engagement with staff representatives. These provide greater transparency and fairness, ensure compliance with evolving legal requirements, and strengthen staff rights and benefits.

Challenges

The broader context in which the EEB operates continues to shape internal dynamics. Shrinking civic space, increasing pressure on civil society and global political developments have created emotional and psychological strain for staff working directly on these issues.

At the same time, funding constraints limit the organisation's ability to expand staffing, invest further in training, or provide the full range of support required by a growing and highly skilled team.

Workload and stress management remain key areas of attention. While important progress has been made, the organisation recognises the need for a deeper understanding of psychosocial risks. Preparations for an external psychosocial risk assessment were completed in 2025, with the survey launched in early 2026 to inform future actions.

What's needed next

In 2026, the EEB will continue to strengthen People and Culture as a core pillar of organisational resilience. Key priorities include:

- Supporting staff in a challenging political and financial environment, with a focus on wellbeing, psychological safety and sustainable workload management
- Creating more structured opportunities for connection and resilience, including peer support, cross-team collaboration and wellbeing initiatives
- Continuing to invest in training and capacity building, with targeted development opportunities for team leads and key roles
- Using insights from the psychosocial risk assessment to guide new measures that support organisational health and long-term staff satisfaction

The EEB remains committed to being an employer that reflects its values, supports its people, and builds the internal capacity needed to sustain impact in an increasingly complex environment.



MEMBERSHIP AND NETWORK

What worked

The EEB continued to mobilise the environmental movement as Europe's largest and most inclusive network of environmental citizens' organisations. Covering a broad spectrum of issues, the network connects actors across local, national and European levels, enabling coordinated and impactful advocacy.

At the Annual General Meeting on 20–21 May 2025, we further strengthened this position by welcoming twelve new members, expanding both our geographic reach and thematic diversity. These included organisations working on climate, circular economy, rights-based approaches and sustainable development across Europe.

Following these additions, the EEB network brought together over 190 member organisations across 41 countries in 2025. This diversity is a key strength. Through our thematic Working Groups – the core of member engagement – organisations come together to develop and align positions, coordinate advocacy and campaigns, and amplify collective impact.

This ability to unite a diverse membership around evidence-based and coherent policy positions continues to make the EEB a trusted and recognised interlocutor for EU institutions and international processes.

Challenges

The increasingly volatile geopolitical context, combined with backtracking on environmental protections and widespread disinformation, requires stronger and more responsive support for members. There is growing demand for timely insights, advocacy tools and communications capacity.

At the same time, civic space and funding for civil society organisations are shrinking in several parts of Europe. This affects members' ability to engage fully and reinforces the importance of a strong, supportive European network.

What's needed next

In this context, the EEB will continue to expand and diversify its membership, with a particular focus on strengthening youth engagement to ensure a resilient and future-proof movement.

At the same time, we will deepen member engagement through targeted capacity-building, skills-sharing and improved tools for collaboration. Strengthening opportunities for joint projects and coordinated advocacy will be key to increasing collective impact.

We will further invest in our role as a connector and amplifier of the environmental movement, ensuring that members – regardless of size, geography or resources – have the support needed to mobilise their constituencies, engage effectively in EU-level processes and strengthen their outreach in an increasingly constrained civic space.

Continued support will enable the EEB to strengthen the resilience of its network, deepen policy coordination and scale up member services – maintaining its unique role as a unifying force for environmental action in Europe and ensuring that collective expertise translates into tangible policy outcomes.

Interested in becoming a member?

Get in touch via membership.team@eeb.org to learn more!



GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

What worked

At the 2025 Annual General Meeting, EEB members elected a new Board and Council, reinforcing the organisation's governance with a strong mandate to represent and advance member priorities across Europe. Throughout the year, these bodies provided strategic direction, legitimacy and accountability, working closely with the Secretariat to align organisational priorities with EU political developments and ensure effective implementation of the 2025 Work Programme.

The Board and Council played an active role in engaging with EU Council Presidencies – including Poland and Denmark, as well as preparations for Ireland – helping to maintain the visibility and influence of EEB priorities at key policy moments. They also contributed to strengthening internal governance by preparing updates to the organisation's Statutes and Standing Orders, ensuring they remain fit for purpose.

Progress was also made on advancing diversity and inclusion within governance structures. The Board introduced a Gender Watch tool on a trial basis to support more balanced participation in its meetings. The Council further strengthened its role as a strategic forum for horizontal policy discussions and membership mobilisation, enabling timely exchange on fast-moving political developments. In November 2025, it adopted the EEB's first position on security, defence and militarisation, reflecting the organisation's evolving policy scope.

A major milestone was the mid-term review of the EEB Long-Term Strategy 2020–2030. This participatory process brought together insights from Working Groups, governance bodies, staff and the wider

membership. A key moment was the Strategy Forum held on 20 May 2025, which enabled collective reflection on achievements, emerging challenges and future priorities. The review, to be adopted in 2026, has strengthened the shared vision of the network and reaffirmed the EEB's role in translating diverse perspectives into coordinated and impactful action.

Challenges

Operating in an increasingly complex and fast-moving policy environment places growing demands on governance structures to remain responsive, inclusive and strategically aligned. Ensuring consistent engagement across a large and diverse membership, while maintaining efficient and timely decision-making, remains an ongoing challenge.

At the same time, the evolving political landscape – including shifting EU priorities and increasing pressure on civil society – requires continuous adaptation of governance processes to maintain relevance and impact.

What's needed next

In 2026, the EEB will adopt its updated Long-Term Strategy towards 2030. Building on this foundation, the organisation will continue to strengthen governance as a key driver of credibility and influence.

This includes enhancing coordination across governance structures, supporting informed and timely decision-making, and ensuring diverse and representative participation. Continued investment in governance will enable the EEB to respond effectively to emerging challenges, while maintaining its role as a trusted and representative voice of the European environmental movement.



A UNIQUE NETWORK

Join the movement!

The strength of the EEB lies in its diverse and engaged membership. We bring together organisations from across Europe to shape policy, share expertise and drive collective impact on environmental priorities.

Members benefit from tailored EU policy insights, advocacy tools, and active participation in thematic Working Groups covering key environmental issues. The network also offers opportunities for visibility, outreach and direct engagement with EU institutions, alongside financial support for participation in key EEB events for full members.

Our flexible membership structure – with full and associate categories – enables organisations of different sizes and capacities to engage meaningfully.

Beyond membership, we collaborate with a wide range of partners and coalitions to strengthen collective action and amplify impact across Europe.

Interested in becoming a member?

Get in touch via membership.team@eeb.org to learn more!

Meet the 2025 Board

- Mr Toni VIDAN (President), AirClim, Sweden
- European Member – Mr Stefan SCHEUER (Treasurer), CHEMTrust
- Ukraine – Mr Andriy ANDRUSEVYCH (Vice-President), RACSE
- European Member – Ms Pegah MOULANA (Vice-President), Youth and Environment Europe (YEE)
- European Member – Ms Anke STOCK (Vice-President), Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF)
- Austria – Mr Bernhard ZLANABITNIG (Vice-President), Umweltdachverband
- Spain – Ms Nuria BLÁZQUEZ, Ecologistas en Acción
- Luxembourg – Ms Karima HAMMOUCHE, Natur & Umwelt
- Slovakia – Ms Ivana MALEŠ, INCIEN
- Germany – Mr Andre PRESCHER-SPIRIDON, Deutscher Naturschutzring (DNR)
- France – Mr Arnaud SCHWARTZ, France Nature Environnement (FNE)
- Ireland – Ms Attracta UI BHROIN, An Taisce

The 2025 Council

The Council is our strategic forum for horizontal policy discussions and membership mobilisation, enabling timely exchange on fast-moving political developments.





EEB
European
Environmental
Bureau

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

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