

ECOCIDE ALLIANCE

INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY ALLIANCE
FOR THE RECOGNITION OF ECOCIDE

PRESS FOLDER

**LAUNCH OF THE INTERNATIONAL
PARLIAMENTARY ALLIANCE FOR
THE RECOGNITION OF ECOCIDE
October 23rd 2020 / Worldwide**

1 / PRESS RELEASE

2 / OBJECTIVES AND CONTEXT

3 / MEMBERS BIOGRAPHY

1 / PRESS RELEASE

Paris, on 23 October 2020.

A unique coalition of parliamentarians and elected representatives from all over the world launches an alliance for the recognition of the crime of ecocide.

Today, 23 October 2020, 10 elected representatives from 9 countries have launched an alliance for the recognition of the most serious crimes against our planet: the crime of ecocide.

Ecocide has been discussed for more than 50 years; since it was initially quoted at the opening of the first International Conference on the Protection of the Environment; the Conference of Stockholm, by the Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme in 1972. Since then, many of these crimes have been committed for which no one has been held responsible. **By allying forces, these parliamentarians are sending a strong message: this has to stop.**

By working together, they intend to have a united front towards the recognition of ecocide at an international level and especially within the International Criminal Court, where the Republics of Vanuatu and of the Maldives proposed recognizing ecocide. They will also work for the recognition of ecocide where each of the representatives are elected, at national and European levels, and bring exposure on the cases of non-publicized environmental crime scenes from all over the world.

Throughout the past few months, the concept of ecocide reappeared in the political debate with Pope Francis denouncing these crimes on November 15th, 2019. In France, President Macron also addressed ecocide in August 2019 when The Amazonian forest was burning, and the recognition of ecocide was one of the main proposals of the Citizen Convention for Climate which revealed its conclusion in June 2020. In Sweden, a major union recently called for the recognition of Ecocide, as well as in some States of Mexico and in the Brazilian Senate, where a law is being discussed.

Each century comes with its challenges and each continent, each country, each group of people, their own. Today, there is a challenge that unites us all, across borders, and which is the responsibility of our century to overcome: the environmental challenge.

“With this alliance, we unite throughout borders and join forces so that we can move forward in the recognition of these awful crimes all over the world, and maybe at the International Criminal Court level.” says **Marie Toussaint**, MEP, at the initiative of the alliance.

On this day, the members of the Alliance call on all elected representatives all over the globe to join forces and join the Alliance to call on this urgent recognition.

"Right now the law forbids theft and drug trafficking but is silent on the most serious crimes committed against the planet! Now we are all victims of climate breakdown, pollution and the collapse of biodiversity. We must protect nature and future generations in much stronger, more enforceable ways. We must recognise the intrinsic value of ecosystems in our penal code. Because without water, without forests, without clean air, we cannot survive on Earth. The planet is our common home. It's time for criminal law to urgently come to the rescue."

Samuel Cogolati, Belgian Federal Deputy

"Several of us in the alliance are working in countries where the officials in power are openly using government to enrich themselves and their patrons at the expense of the people and the earth. That is not what government is for. The alliance brings together elected officials who believe that governments should protect all peoples' rights, health, safety, and welfare – now and for future generations. Preventing the powerful from destroying the earth's ecosystems is vital to that vision of fair and democratic governance."

Lindsey Schromen-Wawrin, a city councilmember in Port Angeles, Washington State, United States.

"A system where widespread, systematic and severe destruction of ecosystems can occur without serious legal consequences, is by default a system in crises. That is where we find ourselves today, in the middle of a crisis of climate breakdown and the extinction of species, jeopardizing life as we know it on earth. The time to criminalize ecocide and correct this fundamental error is now. The time to acknowledge that life belongs to everything living on this planet, is now. An international law on ecocide in the Rome Statute is one of the most powerful tools we have. We cannot afford to ignore this opportunity. This Alliance is a testimony that we will do everything in our power and fight for it."

Rebecka Le Moine, Member of the Swedish Parliament

"Globally, we have reached the limit. There is no time left for experiments, the time has come when we must take action. Those who destroy our shared house should no longer be allowed to go unpunished by the law. Nature, all creatures living in it and those who defend them have rights and it is high time to demand they are enforced. This Alliance should be seen as a booster for global action giving way to local solutions."

Inés Sabanés, Spanish Deputy

"Australia is a world leader in fossil fuel mining and export, in clearing of woodlands and forests and in species extinction. This alliance will help us to work together to act on destruction like this which is causing massive damage to our shared wellbeing and future"

Australian Greens Senator **Janet Rice**

Members:

- **Rodrigo Agostinho**, deputy at the Federal Assembly (Câmara Federal) of Brazil
- **Samuel Cogolati**, Belgian Federal Deputy
- **Eufemia Cullamat**, Member of the Philippine House of Representatives
- **Rebecka Lemoine**, Member of the Swedish Parliament
- **Caroline Lucas**, Member of the British Parliament
- **Janet Rice**, Australian Senator
- **Inés Sabanés**, Spanish Deputy
- **Lindsey Schromen-Warwin**, City Councilmember in Port Angeles, Washington State, United States
- **Marie Toussaint**, Member of the European Parliament
- **Larissa Waters**, Australian Senator

Press contact : luzemichael@yahoo.fr / +33 6 63 63 40 08

Website link : <https://www.ecocidealliance.org/>

2 / OBJECTIVES AND CONTEXT

Facing the destruction of ecosystems, climate change, and the mass extinction of biodiversity, it is time to criminalise those who threaten the planet and our rights: we, parliamentarians from all over the planet, unite in an international alliance for the recognition of the crime of Ecocide.

We come united, from almost all continents, because our challenge is global and requires common, concerted actions. **We come united** because the destructive system we combat has been putting short-term economic interests ahead of people and the planet. **We come united** because we plan to criminalise the actions of powerful special interests that have, for too long, controlled legal, economic and political power. **We come united** because together, we are stronger to face them, and create a system that allows humans and the planet to thrive.

We come as parliamentarians, because together, we have the mandate to carry the voices of those who are affected in their rights and dignity by the destruction of ecosystems; such as those who do not have access to clean air or water and those who suffer from health issues because of pollutant activities led for the profit of a few. **We come as parliamentarians** because it is our duty to write and vote on the law, the legal frameworks that limit activities that damage the planet, and protect the living.

We will carry the recognition of the crime of Ecocide because current laws, at national and international levels, have failed to prevent environmental degradation for so many years, and now all signals on biodiversity and climate change are on red alert. **We will carry this fight** with the conviction that such levels of environmental crime recognition and implementation can fundamentally reverse the way our societies interact with nature, with ownership of its resources and with justice, which is the only way forward. **We will carry this fight** in defense of the human rights and the dignity of those who suffer the consequences of ecocides, especially indigenous people.

In order to do so, we are building an alliance of parliamentarians and elected representatives from all over the globe to work together for this cause! Stronger together, we commit **to alert, weigh and influence executive powers and legislative processes at all levels, and gather up civil society and citizens to enable the recognition of the crime of Ecocide.**

> **We will influence executive powers** by bringing pressure to those, at national and international levels within the United Nations; on those who can carry and support an amendment to the Rome Statute and the introduction of the crime of Ecocide within the mandate of the International Criminal Court;

> We will mobilise all tools at our disposal in our assemblies; make use of local, national and supranational fora, **to propose advanced environmental penal legislation, to mount coalitions, to win amendments and concrete laws penalizing ecocide.**

> **We will use our position to alert and bring exposure to major environmental destruction** cases happening all over the planet, and to those at the frontline of these crimes. We are ready to build, support and lead large campaigns, gathering all the citizens we represent in this fight.

Our Alliance will allow us to share good practices, resources and tools from our specific regions and assemblies; and will serve as a hub for debating and building a common strategy and expertise on the matter. Our Alliance will also be strengthened through trainings, and input from external experts, lawyers, scientists and activists.

3 / MEMBERS BIOGRAPHY

Marie Toussaint (French / European Union)



Marie Toussaint has been a Member of the European Parliament since May 2019. She is in the institution working on the development of environmental law's ambition and enforcement for the rights of the people and of natural commons. As a lawyer, she founded in 2015 the French climate justice NGO "Notre Affaire à Tous" which initiated "l'Affaire du Siècle", the first ever climate litigation case against

France, historically gathering more than 2 300 000 signatures of support. She is committed to fight for the recognition of ecocide crime and achieve environmental justice.

Rodrigo Agostinho (Brasil)



Rodrigo Agostinho has been a deputy at the Federal Assembly (Câmara Federal) of Brazil since 2019. He was elected with more than 100 000 votes to represent the state of Sao Paulo. He is a member of the PSB (Brazilian Socialist Party). He was the mayor of Bauru (+400 000 inhabitants) between January 2009 and December 2016. Lawyer and ambientalist, he is the president of the Commission on the Environment at the Federal Assembly, and president of the Ambientalist Parliamentary Front (2020).

Samuel Cogolati, Belgium



Samuel Cogolati has been a Member of Parliament since May 2019. He is a member of the Green Party (Ecolo) and vice-chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee. In July 2020, he introduced a bill in the House of Representatives in Belgium to criminalize ecocide within its borders and to support island nations Vanuatu and the Maldives in their quest to amend the ICC's Rome Statute to include the crime of ecocide. Before being elected,

Samuel was a PhD researcher writing a thesis at the University of Leuven on the role of international law to protect the commons.

Eufemia 'Ka Femia' Cullamat, Philippines



Rep. Eufemia "Ka Femia" C. Cullamat is the first genuine grassroots representative from the Indigenous Peoples of Mindanao. She is a Lumad peasant from the Manobo tribe in Surigao del Sur, Caraga Region. She grew up in the mountains of the Andap Valley where she would walk 20 kilometers to get to the nearest school. Because of this, she was forced to drop out of school due to its inaccessibility.

Despite the difficulties, Ka Femia has dedicated herself to serve her Lumad community. She has been an active leader in her Lumad community since the 1980's. On September 1 2015, the bloody Lianga Massacre happened in the Lumad community of Surigao del Sur. She became a full-time organizer for the regional Lumad organization. She was one of the most vocal speakers in exposing the abuses against Lumad communities and called for justice for the slain Lumad leaders. In 2016, She was elected Chairperson of KASALO-Caraga. In 2018, Ka Femia was elected Deputy Secretary General of Kusog sa Katawhang Lumad sa Mindanao (KALUMARAN). In 2019, she was elected as a representative to the 18th Congress under Bayan Muna Partylist.

Rebecka LeMoine (Sweden)



Rebecka Le Moine is a member of the green party and spokesperson for Biodiversity. She has been awarded the "environmental hero" by the WWF and the King of Sweden, for taking the initiative to celebrate the UN biodiversity day in Sweden. With a master degree in conservation biology and a background as a biology consultant, her biggest concern is to find political solutions to tackle the mass extinction of our fellow species. Therefore, she is working to change our basic values, where animals and Nature also have legal rights, and where ecocide is recognized as a criminal act.

Caroline Lucas, Great Britain



Caroline Lucas is the UK's only Green party MP and represents the constituency of Brighton Pavilion on the south coast of England.

She was first elected to Parliament in 2010, and has been re-elected three times since, each time increasing her majority. Caroline has helped raise the profile of the Green Party both with her policy initiatives and multiple media appearances on national TV, radio and online. Although she remains the only Green party MP, they now have more than 300 councillors across the country.

Caroline has brought Green issues, whether on environmental and social protections or the need for a fairer electoral system, to the House of Commons and was the first MP to raise the need to declare a climate emergency. She has demonstrated that it is possible for politics to be conducted in a different way, building effective and constructive relationships with other parties to campaign on issues which unite us.

Janet Rice (Australia)



Senator Janet Rice is an Australian Greens Senator for Victoria, and is the party spokesperson for science, research and innovation, forests, foreign affairs, multiculturalism, transport and infrastructure, and LGBTIQ+ issues. She is the Federal Greens' Party Room Chair and Deputy Whip.

Janet is a climate scientist by training. She has been a community and environmental activist and campaigner all her adult life, and is proud of her role as one of the leaders of the campaign that led to the creation of National Parks in East Gippsland in Victoria that protect some of the most intact and biodiverse forests in Australia, and of being one of the founders of the Australian Greens Victoria.

Prior to becoming a senator in 2014 Janet was a councillor and mayor of Maribyrnong Council in Melbourne's west, and Chair of the Melbourne Metropolitan Transport forum. Throughout her time in the Senate, Janet has been a passionate advocate for nature, for action on our climate crisis and for peace, democracy and human rights and economic and social justice across the globe.

Ines Sabanes, Spain



Inés Sabanés has been a Member of the Spanish Parliament since January 2020 and co-spokesperson of the Spanish Green Party, Equo, since February 2020. From 2016 to 2020, she was local councillor of the city of Madrid, in charge of sustainable mobility where she put in place Madrid Central, a low emissions zone in the centre of Madrid. She has occupied different political responsibilities in Spanish institutions, and she has always defended general interest, human rights and green politics as a way to get a fairer and more sustainable world.

Lindsay Schromen-Wawrin (United States)



Lindsey Schromen-Wawrin is a city councilmember in his hometown of Port Angeles, Washington State, United States, a small city on the edge of the Salish Sea and the Olympic Mountains, in the historic territory of the Klallam People (nəxʷsɫáʔəm).

He is also a lawyer, focusing on issues of the relative power of governments, corporations, and the people, specifically state interference with local democracy.

He has represented the Little Mahoning Watershed, Crystal Spring Ecosystem, and Lake Erie Ecosystem in court, and published on rights of nature in *Representing Ecosystems in Court: An Introduction for Practitioners*, 31 Tulane Env'tl. L.J.270 (2018); *Nature's rights through lawmaking in the United States*, in La Follette & Maser (Eds.), *SUSTAINABILITY AND THE RIGHTS OF NATURE IN PRACTISE* (CRC Press 2019); and *The Rights of Nature Movement in the United States*, in Anthony R. Zelle et al. (Eds.), *EARTH LAW: EMERGING ECOCENTRIC LAW - A GUIDE FOR PRACTITIONERS* (Aspen Coursebook, Wolters Kluwers 2020).

Larissa Joy Waters (Australia)



In 2010, Larissa Waters became the first Australian Greens Senator ever elected in Queensland. She is now the Australian Greens' co-deputy Leader, Leader in the Senate, and national spokesperson on Women, Democracy, Mining & Resources.

Before entering parliament, Senator Waters worked as a community sector environmental lawyer. In 2010 she was named Australian

Young Environmental Lawyer of the Year.

She is passionate about representative democracy and public participation, accountability in government, equality for women, and protecting our environment. She works tirelessly to improve federal laws to end domestic violence, transition to renewable energy sources, and clean up politics by ending corporate donations to political parties and establishing a federal corruption watchdog.

She lives in Brisbane with her two young daughters, the younger of whom caused a bit of a stir when she became the first baby to be breastfed in Australia's federal parliament.