

FOREWORD



[Youth for Ecocide Law](#) (Y4EL) was founded in 2021 in response to growing frustration among global youth over the lack of action to address the climate and ecological crisis. It is the only youth-led global organization whose primary aim is the **recognition of ecocide as an international crime**, in order to:

- Deter, prevent and sanction the worst harms to nature and climate,
- Create a taboo around mass harm to the environment
- Strongly reinforce existing environmental regulations
- Support fulfillment of multilateral environmental agreements, pledges & goals

Y4EL works in close collaboration with [Stop Ecocide International](#) as it's youth network, SEI being the global advocacy NGO leading the global conversation about ecocide law.

Y4EL's aim is to call for clear legal guardrails to hold political and corporate decision-makers accountable when they cause severe and widespread or long-term harm to the natural world and the future.

The Y4EL network was officially founded at the Stockholm+50 International Meeting, where [The Global Youth Position Paper for S+50](#) included a call to: *“Recognize large scale environmental destruction, ecocide, as a punishable crime in domestic laws and in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.”*

The movement has grown significantly and there are now Y4EL teams/members across Europe, Africa, South America, North America and Asia. Our activities include:

- Social Media: ([X](#) , [LinkedIn](#) , [Instagram](#))
- Organizing [panel events](#)/webinars
- Creative projects (eg [Artbook Project](#))
- Writing reports (eg [Ecocide Law and the Rights of the Child](#))

Official website: www.stopecocide.earth/youth



Additional Logo:

THE CASE OF LAW; THE ECOCIDE LAW

Gearing on to the 2030 benchmark, the science has been clear all along. We need to change our actions, or earth will not be able to support the life of us and the billions of other species existing in it sufficiently. Shattering statistics continue to suffice, one of which stating that we may surpass the 1.5° benchmark in the next 5 years, and we know the ripple effects of that. However, the climate and ecological crisis, if not emergency, is seemingly not alarming enough to its huge contributors, mostly etched within the fossil fuel, oil and gas industries, and in some way, enabling governments. Accountability has become a concept that was thrown out of the window, and the window of the burning house called earth. Young people across the world, and especially those in Africa are clear that this cannot continue, it has to stop. We are, and soon will be the majority of the world population, and are the next, if not current generation. All these decisions being made by the wealthy, or by governments without our absolute involvement, are going to ultimately affect our lives, and so for the longest.

The exploration of the use of legal avenues to protect, preserve and defend the environment, not as a last resort, but as a first step to protecting Earth is one method we front. One such avenue is the campaign being led by the state of Vanuatu and Stop Ecocide Foundation in the ICC to recognise the crime of Ecocide as a fifth crime. A similar process is also in the works in the UN's ICJ, and it is inevitable that now the law can, will and should be used as a deterrence mechanism to protecting Earth, in addition to the other strategies of adaptation, mitigation and loss and damage. Therefore, we demand that our voices be heard, not only on the ground, but also on decision making tables. By this we present our key demands as Y4EL and the youth across the world;

*We call on all governments that haven't yet recognized the crime of Ecocide (mass environmental destruction) by all involved stakeholders as a crime under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, to do so, not only as a misdemeanor, but as a criminal offense, joining the other 4 crimes charged by the court.

* By this, we front all governments to explore and implement other legal means of domestication of this law; the Ecocide Law, through various avenues such as; Recognizing the full rights of nature. Upholding the recently added right by the UN, for citizens and species to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. Ensure the right to the youth, children and future generations to inherit a livable and sustainable planet. Free from ecocidal acts such as massive deforestation, ocean destruction, dangerous-over-exploitive and unreplenishable mining activities both on terrestrial and marine areas of the Earth .

*We call on all businesses, civil society organizations, activists and even individuals to center their demand, strategies and even policies to have inclines towards the youth,

environmental protection, and more so the ecocide law in all their different working contexts, to achieve the end goal of protecting life, and life on/of earth.

* Finally, in regard to indigenous peoples, who make up most of the communities in Africa, that governments, organizations, civil society and all parties, respect their rights as demanded by the United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), not only towards them, but also their lands. The inclusion of their traditions and knowledge in key policies among states, protection and inclusion of their sustainable ecosystems and livelihoods and finally, their full participation and representation in all decision making tables. We will not be silent or silenced on these and more of our demands that aim to protect our lives, or even give us a life. We refuse to be excluded from critical environmental decision-making tables and/or processes. The voices of the youth can no longer be ignored. We are fighting on the same side of this climate war, the side of life, the side of earth. Only that this time and henceforth, we are leading.