



# 06

## International and

## EU

### **ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT - COMMITMENT BEYOND LUXEMBOURG**

Key decisions on sustainable development are taken at European and international level. It is therefore all the more important to actively monitor these developments and get involved.

Thanks to its European and international network, Mouvement Ecologique is able to do so in a coherent manner. At a time when deregulation is advancing at a dramatic pace, this is more important than ever.



## GLOBAL SOLIDARITY

Mouvement Écologique is a member of several global and European alliances. This membership is of paramount importance, as it is not possible for a national organisation such as Mouvement Écologique to regularly take the initiative on international and/or EU-level issues. The information and preparatory work provided by partner organisations are therefore crucial, enabling Mouvement Écologique to take action.

Furthermore, these partnerships enable joint actions to be carried out. A single organisation cannot achieve much at European level, but together they are stronger. Consequently, the Mouvement Écologique's involvement, particularly at European level, continues to grow, and it also actively contributes to global campaigns launched by partner organisations.

On key European issues, such as deregulation, pesticides, climate protection, etc., Mouvement Écologique has been active – particularly within the joint network at European level. This has mainly taken place within the framework of *'Friends of the Earth'*, of which Mouvement Écologique is the Luxembourg section, as well as in projects of the *European Environmental Bureau* (EEB).

Positions have been supported on several occasions, and letters from our European partner organisations on issues related to sustainable development have been sent to the relevant ministers; positions have been forwarded to MEPs; or European petitions have been co-signed.

These extensive *'Friends of the Earth'* networks across Europe and at the international level, as well as those of the *'European Environmental Bureau'*, are encouraging.

They show that citizens across Europe are committed to the same ideals.

As a member of CAN Europe, another pan-European network of organisations campaigning for climate protection, the Mouvement Écologique also regularly attends its general assemblies, keeps abreast of current developments at EU level, helps draft letters addressed to policy-makers, takes part in workshops and supports pan-European projects.

Mouvement Écologique is also a member of PAN (*Pesticide Action Network*) in order to run an even more coherent campaign against the use of pesticides.

Mouvement Écologique is also a member of the *'Right to Repair Network'*, a European network (which campaigns for the right to repair), as well as the German alliance *'Runder Tisch Reparatur'*.

## INFORMATION ON PEOPLE'S GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

For years, reports from FoE member organisations have been regularly published in the *'Kéisecker info'* and on the Mouvement Écologique website.

These articles aim to show that all over the world, people are campaigning for a better and fairer world – even in countries where such a commitment is far more difficult than in Luxembourg. At the same time, global solidarity is a source of inspiration!

## MERCOSUR FREE TRADE AGREEMENT: THE RESISTANCE CONTINUES

In 2025, resistance against the controversial Mercosur agreement – the agreement between the South American states and Europe – continued.

- **Open letter to the government: 'Put an end to this harmful free trade agreement'**

Primarily for geopolitical reasons, governments came out in favour of this agreement in 2025, including those that had been extremely sceptical of it until recently. The Luxembourg government also appeared to have changed its position in 2025.

ASTM, Forum Politique (an alliance of development organisations), Greenpeace Luxembourg and the Mouvement Écologique have called on the relevant ministers, in an open letter, to clearly reject this agreement, which encourages deforestation, human rights violations, exploitation, etc.

All the more so as the EU-Mercosur agreement, according to international experts, is expected to bring only very limited economic benefits, but would cause significant social, ecological and economic damage



(major problems: overproduction of export-oriented monocultures in the Global South, the undermining of small-scale farming systems, accelerated deforestation, etc.).

The agreement also reinforces a hierarchical trade dynamic between industrialised countries and commodity-exporting countries and exacerbates existing inequalities.

The signatory organisations have therefore called for a clear rejection of the agreement and for a trade policy that prioritises quality standards, small-scale agriculture, human rights and sustainable and fair development.

- **Conference: 'The fatal consequences of an "EU-Mercosur" trade agreement: the perspective of a Brazilian scientist'**

On 26 June 2025, Professor Antônio Inácio Andrioli, a Brazilian agronomist and philosopher, spoke at a conference organised by the Mouvement Écologique and ASTM on the social and ecological consequences of the planned EU-Mercosur agreement. He clearly warned that this agreement primarily serves the interests of large corporations and puts small farmers, indigenous peoples and environmental defenders at risk.

During the discussion, it became clear that large landowners in the Mercosur states wield considerable political influence, whilst local markets and peasant structures are being weakened. Andrioli called for a trade policy based on solidarity, fair partnerships and ecological responsibility, and spoke out clearly against the ratification of the agreement in its current form.

In conclusion, it was emphasised that this agreement not only poses ecological risks but also exacerbates structural inequalities. Even if European farmers would also face

to increased competition and problematic imports, it is the Mercosur states themselves that will suffer the most dramatic consequences: continued deforestation, increased use of pesticides, concentration of land ownership in the hands of a handful of players, and social upheaval.

## ARBITRATION COURTS ALSO THREATEN EUROPE'S CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS!

Luxembourg is currently being sued for \$16 billion by Russian oligarch Mikhail Fridman because our country froze his assets as part of EU sanctions following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

This case illustrates a fundamental and far-reaching problem: thanks to so-called investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanisms, enshrined in over 1,000 bilateral investment treaties, foreign investors can bypass national courts and sue governments for damages before private arbitration tribunals.

The Fridman case is not an isolated incident: *Friends of the Earth* and its partner organisations have demonstrated, using ten current case studies from the EU, how ISDS is also being used to challenge national security measures, windfall taxes or environmental decisions handed down by national courts. This mechanism places private profits above democracy, social and environmental protection, thereby undermining the ability of the EU and its Member States to govern sovereignly.

Le Mouvement Écologique and a broad coalition of European organisations are therefore calling for the systematic termination of these obsolete agreements and the abolition of these problematic tribunals, and have submitted a dossier containing 10 illustrative problematic cases, including the Fridman case.



## EU-WIDE INITIATIVES AND CAMPAIGNS: AGAINST REGULATORY DOWNSIZING

Numerous pan-European initiatives have been supported:

- **#HandsOffNature campaign:** in September 2025, MecO, in collaboration with natur&ëmwelt, hundreds of NGOs and over 65,000 European citizens, called for EU environmental legislation not to be weakened. The aim was to maintain existing protection measures for nature, forests and water conservation, including the EU Deforestation Regulation, the Water Framework Directive, the Habitats Directive and the Nature Restoration Law. Citizens were able to share their views directly via the European Commission’s platform. The #handsoff campaign will also continue in 2026 with various actions.
- **European Soil Act (Soil Monitoring Act):** in October, MecO, in collaboration with 50 other NGOs, campaigned for an EU-wide law to protect and restore degraded soil. The European Parliament adopted this law on 23 October 2025.
- **Uneven food standards within the EU:** in collaboration with other organisations, MecO highlighted the inequalities between pesticide standards on imports and called for stricter limits on banned substances.
- **Do not downgrade the wolf’s protection status:** in 2025, Mouvement Ecologique, alongside more than 200 European environmental organisations, signed a letter addressed to all EU environment ministers demanding that the wolf’s protection status not be downgraded at national level. This was despite the EU having recently downgraded the wolf from ‘strictly protected’ to ‘protected’. The organisations emphasised that this decision contradicts scientific evidence, as the wolf continues to be in an unfavourable conservation status in six of the EU’s seven biogeographical regions. The Court of Justice of the European Union had also confirmed in June 2025 that each Member State must independently ensure a favourable conservation status. Instead of calls for culling motivated by political considerations, the NGOs advocated for cooperative coexistence strategies – including livestock protection, preventive measures and fair compensation schemes. The wolf, as a conservation success story and an important element of European biodiversity, should continue to be protected in Luxembourg on the basis of scientific data.



These initiatives demonstrate the Mouvement Écologique’s ongoing commitment to environmental and health protection, biodiversity and sustainable agriculture, both at national and EU level.

## FINANCIAL PROBLEMS AT ‘FRIENDS OF THE EARTH INTERNATIONAL’ - AND SOLIDARITY MATTERS!

Following a significant reduction in public funding for environmental NGOs at both European and international levels, *Friends of the Earth International*, the global alliance of which Mouvement Écologique is a member, has found itself in a very difficult financial situation.

These cuts considerably weaken the functioning and voice of civil society, as well as engagement at the international and European levels (and also, to some extent, within Member States). The importance of these organisations is paramount, especially at a time when massive setbacks in the environmental field are anticipated and the influence of economic lobbies continues to grow.

As the coordinator of national ‘*Friends of the Earth*’ organisations worldwide, FOE International plays a central role in supporting initiatives for climate action and social justice in the Global South. The removal of co-financing opportunities for programmes in these countries has triggered a dramatic chain reaction for many national organisations.

On 30 June, an extraordinary general meeting was held to find a joint solution to maintain operations and continue funding international programmes. Significant budget cuts, an extraordinary drawdown of reserves and, in part, a reorganisation were decided upon. Whilst retaining a solid core business, *Friends of the Earth* is placing greater emphasis on fundraising in order to consolidate its finances.

As the Luxembourg representative of ‘*Friends of the Earth*’, the Mouvement Ecologique took part in this general meeting and expressed its solidarity with the parent organisation.

## MECO SUPPORTS THE DEMANDS FOR SUSTAINABLE FRAMEWORKS FOR AI

The application of artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming widespread across all sectors, particularly in the fields of science and business. These technologies are presented as the way forward, but they are already having a significant impact in terms of  $\text{CO}_2$  emissions as well as water and electricity consumption. This is why MECO supports CAN Europe’s demands: no fossil fuels, targeted restrictions on use to relieve pressure on networks, sustainable supply chains with equitable participation, and greater transparency in the use of AI.



## RESISTANCE AGAINST THE 'WEAKENING' OF EUROPEAN CLIMATE POLICY

The pressure for 'deregulation' in Brussels is considerable. Unfortunately, this masks a challenge to key objectives aimed at making the EU more sustainable.

In addition to the 'Omnibus' package, which aimed to reduce the responsibility of large companies in their supply chains (CSDD), biodiversity and climate targets are also under threat.

For example, new instruments are under discussion, supposedly designed to help achieve these objectives – without, however, decarbonising the European economy. These include the integration of CO<sub>2</sub> certificates from non-EU countries or carbon capture technologies that are still very immature. It is essential to maintain an ambitious and determined European climate policy.

In this context, MECO supports the measures initiated by its partner organisation CAN Europe: the signing of a letter prepared by CAN Europe addressed to the European Commission, and the joint drafting of a specific letter with ASTM addressed to the Minister for the Environment, Serge Wilmes.

## INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

Le Mouvement Ecologique has expressed its solidarity with global initiatives led by partner organisations in numerous letters.

For example, in a letter addressed to the financial institutions involved in the Mozambique LNG project. In this letter, numerous civil society organisations make serious allegations of human rights violations that occurred in late 2024 around a gas extraction facility.

However, as the financial institutions have not yet taken a public stance on the alleged massacre of civilians, the coalition of 126 civil society organisations, including the Mouvement Ecologique, reiterated its call in 2025 for an independent international investigation to clarify the circumstances of this alleged massacre, as well as the suspension of support for the Mozambique LNG project until the results of this investigation are available.

## UN CONFERENCE ON BIODIVERSITY: LUXEMBOURG MUST FINALLY ASSUME ITS RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE PRESERVATION OF OUR LIFE-SUPPORT SYSTEM!

In October 2024, the 16th United Nations Conference on Biodiversity of the Convention on Biological Diversity was held in Cali, Colombia. In the run-up to the event, Mouvement Écologique had set out its recommendations and, in a press release, had called on the Luxembourg government and, in particular, the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Biodiversity, Serge Wilmes, to fulfil their responsibilities regarding biodiversity conservation in Luxembourg.

For Mouvement Écologique, it was extremely strange that, just one month before this international conference on biodiversity, EU Member States had voted in favour of downgrading the wolf's protection status – and that Luxembourg was among those supporting this measure. This therefore seems almost schizophrenic, given that at the World Conference on Biodiversity, countries in the Global South are being urged to redouble their efforts to protect their large carnivores...

It therefore seems easier to preach water whilst drinking wine: wealthy Luxembourg itself has for years failed to meet its own targets aimed at curbing the rapid loss of biodiversity – the very issue on which we are trying to convince other countries... In October, there was no indication that the Minister for Biodiversity himself would take responsibility here at home. Instead of taking clear measures to strengthen nature conservation, he even supported the weakening of the Nature Conservation Act as part of the government's 'Build More and Faster' project (for our campaign on this issue, see the separate chapter).

Mouvement Ecologique's conclusion is therefore as follows: conferences such as the one on global biodiversity are important. But political credibility – and success in biodiversity protection – are achieved above all through concrete action in one's own country. This is where Minister Wilmes is finally put to the test, to act consistently in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture.