



EUROPEAN CONVENTION
ON HUMAN RIGHTS
CONVENTION EUROPÉENNE
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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AD HOC MULTIDISCIPLINARY GROUP ON THE ENVIRONMENT (GME)

**COUNCIL OF EUROPE STRATEGY ON THE ENVIRONMENT
ACTION PLAN**

as taken note of by the GME on 3 December at its 5th meeting

Document prepared by the Secretariat

Background

As the Council of Europe Strategy on the Environment, this Action Plan is informed by: a) the challenges and needs identified by the Ad Hoc Multidisciplinary Group on the Environment (GME), b) the exchanges of views held with key stakeholders and c) the Compendium on the Council Europe's environment activities (GME(2024)2rev).

It shows the actions undertaken and planned by various Council of Europe sectors, bodies and institutions as a follow-up to the to the Reykjavík Declaration and as a contribution to the implementation of the Council of Europe Strategy on the Environment. Their integration in the Programme of Activities follows their respective decision-making processes and is to be considered in the context of the Organisations' Programme and Budget cycle.

Each action is allocated to one of the five strategic objectives, even if it may be contributing to achieving other objectives as well. Information on the expected results, internal and external partners is also provided. In line with the Council of Europe's commitment towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, each strategic objective identifies the most relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)¹ to be considered.

Two separate sections (on mainstreaming and on coordination and communication) are added to ensure visibility of the efforts deployed to implement these important aspects of the 4th Summit's mandate.

This Action Plan is designed as a living tool allowing for the integration of new actions as they emerge. An initial version of the Action Plan was issued in March 2025. The current version was revised in November 2025 to take new developments into account.

By clearly outlining concrete steps for implementation, the Action Plan also serves as a practical tool to track progress and facilitate reporting.

¹ Goal 1. No Poverty, Goal 3. Good Health and Well-being, Goal 4. Quality Education, Goal 5. Gender Equality, Goal 6. Clean Water and Sanitation, Goal 7. Affordable and Clean Energy, Goal 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth, Goal 10. Reduced Inequality, Goal 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities, Goal 12. Responsible Consumption and Production, Goal 13. Climate Action, Goal 14. Life Below Water, Goal 15. Life on Land, Goal 16. Peace and Justice Strong Institutions.

Strategic Objective 1

Integrating human rights considerations in environment-related strategies, instruments, legislation, policies and actions, and vice versa.



Action 1.1

Examination of the implementation of the Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)20 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on human rights and the protection of the environment.

Expected Results:

- The Committee of Ministers is informed of developments at national level covered by the provisions of CM/Rec(2022)20.
- Member States are encouraged to make further efforts, where necessary and possible, to implement the provisions of the recommendation in national strategies, legislation, policy, and practice.
- Human rights, both substantive and procedural, are better protected at national level in the environmental context.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

Steering Committee on Human Rights (CDDH); Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights (Commissioner), Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations of the Council of Europe (CINGO).

External Partners:

OHCHR, European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

Action 1.2

Adoption by PACE of reports with a major environment dimension (Ensuring sustainable food security in times of crisis: strengthening resilience and access to food, Guaranteeing the right to access to drinking water, Climate and gender equality – Strengthening the protection of women's rights in the face of climate disruption, Climate action as a human and democratic responsibility) including recommendations addressed to member States and to the Committee of Ministers.

Expected Results:

- National parliaments ensure coherence between PACE recommendations and national parliamentary action on environmental rights and policies;
- PACE strengthens cooperation with UN mechanisms to ensure that environmental rights and recommended policies are aligned with international commitments;
- PACE recommendations on housing and energy are integrated into the Parliamentary Conference *“The Cost-of-Living Crisis: How can the European Social Charter uphold our social rights?”* (December 2025), and into the joint PACE–Congress side event at the *High-Level Conference on the European Social Charter* in Chişinău (March 2026);
- The right to food is recognised in additional national constitutions or framework laws;
- Civil society organisations (CSOs) and youth participate more actively in parliamentary debates on environmental rights and policies;
- The Committee of Ministers provides relevant follow-up to PACE recommendations.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

PACE, Parliamentary network for a healthy environment (NHE), Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, GR-SOC, European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR), European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB), Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH), Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations of the Council of Europe (CINGO), Council of Europe Youth Department.

External Partners:

National parliaments; UN Special Rapporteurs (on human rights and climate change; on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment; on the right to food; on extreme poverty and human rights on the right to adequate housing; on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation); Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); World Health Organization (WHO); civil society organisations (I/NGOs; youth networks), European Parliament.

Action 1.3

Organise events to promote among national parliamentarians PACE’s advocacy for:

1. The recognition of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, in order to support at the national level the active consideration of the recognition of this right, in line with the Reykjavik Declaration; and
2. Raising awareness of the Council of Europe’s ongoing discussions considering an instrument on this right.

Expected Results:

- National parliamentarians are better informed about the long-standing PACE advocacy to achieve recognition of the human right to a healthy environment at both national and Council of Europe levels (in particular PACE Resolution (2396)2021 on Anchoring the right to a healthy environment: need for enhanced action by the Council of Europe);

- National parliaments take action to actively consider recognising the right to a healthy environment into national constitutions and legislation, ensuring effective follow-up of PACE resolutions and the implementation of European Committee of Social Rights and European Court of Human Rights decisions related to environment;
- Support is strengthened for the active consideration of a Council of Europe instrument on the right to a healthy environment;
- PACE's "10 Key Messages for a Healthy Environment" are widely disseminated and updated.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

PACE, Parliamentary network for a healthy environment (NHE), GR-SOC, European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR), Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH), Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations of the Council of Europe.

External Partners:

National parliaments, FAO, UN Special Rapporteur on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, CSOs.

Action 1.4

Targeted questions are included in the context of the European Social Charter's regular and ad hoc reporting procedures on: 1) impact of environmental degradation and climate change on social rights; 2) measures taken by the States Parties to address this impact.

Expected Results:

- Increased knowledge and visibility of impact of the environmental degradation on social rights;
- Increased knowledge and visibility of actions that States Parties are taking or could take to limit that impact, especially for persons and groups in vulnerable situations;
- Development of standards on social rights and climate change/other environmental degradation issues providing overall guidance on measures to be taken to ensure protection of rights at stake through conclusions, statements of interpretation, ad hoc reviews by the ECSR;
- Statement of Interpretation on health and safety of workers exposed to environmental-related risks, including climate change is expected to be adopted by the ECSR by the end of 2025.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

ECSR, Governmental Committee of the European Social Charter and the European Code of Social Security (GC).

External Partners:

Third parties (CSOs, including Youth organisations, social partners, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), and Equality Bodies) submitting comments on the States' reports.

Action 1.5

Support States Parties in implementing ESC rights taking into account their environmental dimension and the need to protect the rights of persons in vulnerable situations and/or exposed to discrimination, including through co-operation activities in different States Parties.

Expected Results:

- Better implementation and increased protection of rights at national level;
- Increased awareness among duty bearers and beneficiaries/rights holders;
- Strengthened accountability of duty bearers;
- Exchange of best practices to inspire action.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

ECSR, GC.

External Partners:

CSOs, including Youth organisations, NHRIs, Equality bodies, social partners, Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB).

Action 1.6

A study prepared by Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI) on the impact of the triple planetary crisis of pollution, climate change and loss of biodiversity on persons exposed to discrimination on the grounds covered by CDADI and measures to prevent and alleviate such impact.

Expected Results:

- Identification of the impact of the environmental crisis on members of the minority groups which fall under the mandate of the CDADI: migrants and people with a migration background, Roma and Travellers, ethnic, linguistic and national minorities, as well as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons, and whether they are disproportionately affected by this crisis.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDADI, Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM), European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), CINGO.

External Partners:

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA); European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI) and European Network of Equality Bodies (Equinet); Amnesty International; European Network Against Racism (ENAR); Ligue Internationale Contre le Racisme et l'Antisémitisme (LICRA); European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI); European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERAC); European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC); Assembly of European Regions (AER); ILGA Europe; academic, professional and business communities.

Action 1.7

Support education and capacity-building on the environment, the triple planetary crisis, and the interlinkage between sustainable development and respect for human rights (children, young people, legal professionals, businesses, civil society, administrations at all levels of governance, etc.). Promote and strengthen educational and awareness-raising activities, using both formal and non-formal methodologies.

Expected Results:

- Access created to tailored resources for education and learning aimed at, and with, children and youth concerning environmental issues, embedding environmental rights and climate justice within programmes on education for democratic citizenship and human rights education, such as the Human Rights Education Youth Programme.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

Joint Council on Youth (CMJ), Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ), European Youth Centres, CINGO.

External Partners:

CSOs, including Youth organisations.

Action 1.8

Support the implementation of the CM/Rec(2024)06 of the Committee of Ministers on young people and climate action in member States, by raising awareness, building capacity, and providing funding opportunities to youth civil society.

Expected Results:

- In member States, authorities responsible for youth are informed of the Recommendation, with its translation into several national languages supported by the Council of Europe.
- Member states are encouraged to take actions as appropriate in line with the CM Recommendation to ensure meaningful participation in climate-related decision-making processes by engaging in dialogue with young people and by establishing accessible consultation mechanisms.

- Thanks to the funding received from the European Youth Foundation (EYF), youth civil society organisations and young people are empowered to participate, take action and support climate action in line with the CM Recommendation.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

Joint Council on Youth, Advisory Council on Youth, European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ), European Youth Foundation, European Youth Centres.

External Partners:

European Youth Forum, national and international youth CSOs, national ministries and agencies responsible for youth.

Action 1.9

Publish a Factsheet highlighting the environmental challenges faced by national minorities, including indigenous communities such as the Sami, and outlining key actions to address them.

Expected results:

- In member States, authorities responsible for national minorities are better informed of the disproportionate impact of environmental degradation and climate change on minority communities, affecting their health, livelihoods, and cultural heritage;
- The environmental policies of member States respect and promote the rights of national minorities, in line with the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

Council of Europe bodies involved

Advisory Committee of the FCNM

External Partners

National and international CSOs, national ministries responsible for environment, human rights and equality

Action 1.10

Release country-specific memorandums containing findings and recommendations on the interplay between the environment and human rights in the country, including on effective access to legal remedies, training for judges and prosecutors, support for environmental human rights defenders, and climate action.

Expected results:

- Concrete recommendations are provided for government agencies, judicial institutions, and civil society actors;
- Identification of gaps and proposed measures to strengthen legal remedies for victims of environmental and human rights violations;
- Relevant state institutions and human rights bodies adopt measures informed by the memorandum.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, CEPEJ, ECSR CDEDU, CDDH, CINGO, HELP.

External Partners:

National ministries responsible for justice, national and international CSOs.

Action 1.11

Non legally binding collection of case studies and set of practical guidelines on the integration of existing human rights perspectives into national environmental strategies, law and policies (without seeking to recognise and define an autonomous right to a healthy environment).

Expected results:

- List case studies and set of practical guidelines on the integration of existing human rights perspectives into national environmental strategies, law and policies.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDENV, CDDH, CDCJ and CDPC, GEC, CDNET, CDADI, CDDEM, CDENF, CMJ, CDCULT.

External Partners:

National relevant ministries, relevant international organisations, national and international CSOs.

Action 1.12

Review of the rights of older people and challenges faced by them in the context of environmental challenges, including, but not limited, to the access of information.

Expected results:

- List the rights of older people and challenges faced by them in the context of environmental challenges;
- Identification of gaps and propose measures to strengthen their protection.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDENV, ECSR, Governmental Committee of the European Social Charter and the European Code of Social Security, CDDH.

External Partners:

National relevant ministries, national and international CSOs.

Strategic Objective 2

Strengthening good democratic governance



Action 2.1

Collection of good practices in Council of Europe member States on publication of information relating to the environment by public authorities on their own initiative as well as upon request.

Expected Results:

- Member States are better informed about practices which comply with international standards on transparency in the public sector as regards environmental information, notably the Tromsø and the Aarhus Conventions.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDDH, Council of Europe Access Info Group.

External Partners:

Monitoring bodies of the Aarhus Convention, CSOs.

Action 2.2

Building upon the analysis of existing frameworks, development of a guidance document “Applying the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)”.

Expected Results:

- Education policymakers, educators at the pre-primary, primary and secondary school levels; and non-formal educators working with learners of all ages are better equipped to apply the RFCDC to ESD.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU).

External Partners:

Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe, European Students' Union, Federation for European Education, Lifelong Learning Platform, Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions.

Action 2.3

Development of the "Education in times of emergencies and crisis toolkit" (EDURES), a policy-making tool for education actors that aims to strengthen the resilience and responsiveness of education in the face of crises and emergencies, ensuring the continuation of quality education and mitigating impact of crises and emergencies on vulnerable groups.

Expected Results:

- The EDURES toolkit will enable public authorities to assess the resilience of education systems and to identify areas of improvement. More broadly, it will ensure that interventions in education complement emergency and resilience planning at the community level, allowing for collaboration between all community actors.

Council of Europe bodies:

CDEDU.

External Partners:

Albania, Italy (Friuli-Venezia-Giulia region), ISIG (Institute of International Sociology in Gorizia, Italy).

Action 2.4

Development of a European Space for Citizenship Education to sustain democracy through quality citizenship through a two-year co-creation process. Education for Sustainable development will be part of this new European Space. The result will be considered at the next Standing Conference of Ministers of Education in 2027.

Expected Results:

- The new European Space for Citizenship Education will foster a higher level of commitment to democratic values and principles in member States, facilitating the promotion of quality citizenship education and international cooperation with this aim;
- Member States will be better equipped to prepare active and responsible citizens and to address current and emerging challenges.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDEDU, Education Policy Advisors Network (EPAN), PACE and at a later stage, other CoE bodies.

External Partners:

German Ministry of Foreign Affairs; civil society networks, including Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe (DARE), teacher and student organisations, CSOs, academics and research institutes including the IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement).

Action 2.5

Preparation of a study on equal participation of women and men in political and public decision-making, which will include a focus on decision-making in environmental matters.

Expected Results:

- Enhanced understanding of equal participation of women and men in decision-making, including on environmental matters.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

Gender Equality Commission (GEC), CINGO, Steering Committee on Democracy (CDDEM), PACE.

External Partners:

CSOs, including Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) Network, University Women of Europe, European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE).

Action 2.6

Address the impact of the triple planetary crisis of pollution, climate change and biodiversity loss on European Social Charter (ESC) rights, social equity, climate justice at the High-Level Conference on the ESC.

Expected Results:

- Provision of guidance to States Parties;
- Increased awareness and strengthened accountability;
- Increased exchange of good practices.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

ECSR, GC, CM, PACE, Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (Congress), CINGO, Advisory Council on Youth, other relevant CoE bodies.

External Partners:

EU, UN, ILO, CSOs, social partners, NHRIs and Equality Bodies.

Action 2.7

Preparation of a set of tools, such as videos and other child-friendly educational material for youth and children on the European Social Charter rights related to the environment.

Expected Results:

- Tools developed contribute to empowering children and youth, to improving their effective and safe access to justice, and their participation in decision making processes.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

ECSR, GC, Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF), Advisory Council on Youth, Joint Council on Youth, PACE.

External Partners:

EU, UN, Youth CSOs, NHRIs.

Action 2.8

Promote inclusive dialogue and meaningful participation with civil society, social partners, in the context of transition to a green economy and other environment-related matters through conferences, seminars, discussions, reports and studies with the active participation of civil society organisations and social partners. Promote civil society and social partner's involvement in decision-making, including in impact assessment processes.

Expected Results:

- Increased participation of rights holders in the design, implementation and evaluation of measures adopted in the context of transition to a green economy and other environment-related matters.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

ECSR, GC, CINGO, PACE.

External Partners:

EU, ILO, CSOs, social partners.

Action 2.9

Follow-up and reflection on the possible revision of the CM Recommendation (2016)3 on human rights and business with the aim of considering the incorporation of corporate environmental responsibility requirements.

Expected Results:

- Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)3 on human rights and business is revised considering the incorporation of corporate environmental responsibility requirements;

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDDH, PACE, Parliamentary Network for a healthy environment, CDCJ, CINGO.

External Partners:

UNDP, OECD, Member States, International organisations (including ICC), CSOs.

Action 2.10

Development of a tool for member States' judicial administrations to integrate sustainability practices in their functioning, taking also into consideration digitalised practices and their impact on the environment.

Expected Results:

- Recommended practices are taken by judiciaries contributing to a decrease in the environmental impact of member States' courts functioning.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ).

Action 2.11

Setting up a specific CEPEJ evaluation exercise on environmental justice (including related to effective access to justice and remedies in environmental issues, efficiency of justice in environment-related cases, execution of judgments).

Expected Results:

- Progress achieved at national levels concerning environmental justice is monitored.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CEPEJ.

External Partners:

Member States (through national correspondents).

Action 2.12

Consideration of a draft Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government dedicated to environmental protection at local level.

Expected Results:

- On the basis of a mandate given by the Committee of Ministers to an intergovernmental committee, the preparation of prepared a study on the feasibility of an Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government relating to environment.
- Further to that, on the basis of an additional mandate, preparation of the draft Protocol.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

Congress, Council of Europe body to be decided by the CM.

Action 2.13

Adoption and implementation of a report on “Water resources under stress: towards better local and regional governance”.

Expected Results:

- Provide guidance to member States to ensure that local and regional governments have the knowledge and tools required to work together to address water resource issues including flooding, water shortages and water pollution.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

Congress.

External Partners:

National, regional and local authorities in the member States.

Action 2.14

Adoption and promotion of the implementation of a Report on coastal erosion.

Expected Results:

- Help ensure that local and regional authorities are aware and equipped to put in place adaptation and mitigation strategies and actions for living resiliently with coastal erosion in our changing climate, and in the context of multilevel governance.
- Guidance for approaches promoting shared responsibilities and collaboration in risk management between national and local authorities as they respond to the threat / reality of coastal erosion.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

Congress.

External Partners:

National, regional and local authorities in member States.

Action 2.15

Preparations of a study on national climate litigation addressing issues of criminal and civil liability in the context of climate change.

Expected results:

- Enhanced understanding of the application of the law in climate change litigation against states and corporations in Europe involving civil liability.

Council of Europe bodies involved

CDCJ

External Partners

National and international CSOs, national ministries responsible for justice and environment

Action 2.16

Fighting climate disinformation.

Expected Results:

- Review of disinformation, misinformation and access to information on environment-related matters including good practices and recommendations for action, also reflecting the perspective of young people and children;

- Help ensure that policy makers and citizens, in particular youth, are aware of the consequences of climate disinformation on the efficient protection of the environment, through events, studies, publications and communication materials;
- Develop tools, including legal texts, to fight against climate disinformation.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDENV, PACE, Congress, Commissioner for Human Rights, CEPEJ, CDCJ, CDMSI, CDNET, CDEDU, CDDEM, CDADI, CDENF, CMJ, CDCULT, CDDH, CINGO, Tromsø Convention and other relevant CoE bodies.

External Partners:

INGOs, associations of journalists, UNOHCHR, UNHRC, UNDP, UN Special Rapporteur on Climate change, Aarhus Convention.

Action 2.17

Review of practices of courts, tribunals and legal professionals specialising in environmental law, including the identification of good procedural and substantive practices.

Expected results:

- List the practices of courts, tribunals and legal professionals specialising in environmental law;
- Identification of good procedural and substantive practices.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDENV, CEPEJ, CDPC, CDCJ, CCJE, CCPE.

External Partners:

Ministries of Justice, national and international CSOs.

Strategic Objective 3

Supporting and protecting Environmental Human Rights Defenders, Environmental Defenders and Whistle Blowers



Action 3.1

Protection of environmental human rights defenders.

Action 3.1.1

Protection of environmental human rights defenders: Examination of the implementation of the relevant provisions in the Committee of Ministers Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)20 to member States on human rights and the protection of the environment.

Expected Results:

- The Committee of Ministers is informed of developments at national level covered by the provisions of CM/Rec(2022)20;
- Member States are encouraged to make further efforts, where necessary, to implement the provisions of the recommendation relating to environmental human rights defenders;
- Member States' consultation and co-operation with environmental human rights defenders is enhanced;
- The use, where appropriate, of the Private Office procedure on human rights defenders interacting with the Council of Europe.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

All sectors, in particular CDENV, CDDH; PACE, Congress, ECHR, Commissioner, Private Office, CINGO, Advisory Council on Youth.

External Partners:

UN/OHCHR, UNECE, UNEP, UN Special rapporteurs, EU/FRA, ENNHRI, CSOs, including Children and Youth organisations.

Action 3.1.2

Protection of environmental human rights defenders: First European Forum of Environment Human Rights Defenders.

Expected Results:

- A platform for regular meetings of Environment Human Rights Defenders is created at European level in line with the recommendations of a group of IOs (UN, EU, CoE etc) and civil society;
- The first European Forum of Environment Human Rights Defenders is hosted by the Council of Europe in June 2026.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

All sectors, in particular CDENV, CDDH; PACE, Congress, ECHR, Commissioner, Private Office, CINGO, Advisory Council on Youth.

External Partners:

UN/OHCHR, UNECE, UNEP, UN Special rapporteurs, EU/FRA, ENNHRI, CSOs, including Children and Youth organisations.

Action 3.2

Follow-up meeting between PACE and the Special Rapporteur on Environmental Defenders under the Aarhus Convention on action by national parliaments.

Expected Results:

- National parliamentarians receive further guidance to support human rights defenders and follow-up to Resolution 2396(2021) on Anchoring the right to a healthy environment: need for enhanced action by the Council of Europe, to Resolution 2554 (2024) on protecting women human rights defenders in Europe and to Resolution 2225(2018) on Protecting human rights defenders in Council of Europe member States.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

PACE, Parliamentary Network for a healthy environment (NHE), CINGO.

External Partners:

Special Rapporteur on Environmental Defenders under the Aarhus Convention.

Action 3.3

Organisation of the pre-event to the Conference of the Presidents of Parliaments on Youth for Planet Protection: A Call to Action.

Expected Results:

- Presidents of the national parliaments take into account young people's voices to develop national policies for a sustainable future.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

PACE, Advisory Council on Youth.

External Partners:

Presidents of Parliaments, Environmental Human Rights Defenders, Climate Activists.

Action 3.4

Support to member States in the implementation of the Recommendation CM/Rec(2024)6 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on young people and climate action, particularly in relation to protecting the rights of human rights defenders.

Expected Results:

- Member States are encouraged to make further efforts, where necessary, to implement the provisions of the recommendation relating to environmental human rights defenders so that the latter can carry out their important role in accordance with the fundamental rights enshrined in the ECHR, in particular freedom of expression (Article 10), freedom of assembly and association (Article 11) and the right to a fair trial (Article 6), as well as the provision of free, accessible legal and judicial support in instances of arrest, and respect of the rights to prohibition of torture, a fair trial and the principle of no punishment without law. In particular, member States are encouraged to ensure the equitable and just treatment of young people following an assessment of policies and practices, by providing the necessary training to and protocols for police and law-enforcement agencies in particular with regard to the distinctive forms of gatherings, demonstrations and advocacy efforts favoured by environmental defenders.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDEJ, Advisory Council on Youth.

External Partners:

Agencies responsible for Youth, CSOs, European Youth Forum, NHRIs.

Action 3.5

Study on the conditions enabling child and young environmental defenders to access information, to safely and freely express themselves, to issue recommendations and to access justice. A child-friendly version of the report will be made available.

Expected results:

- List conditions enabling child and young environmental defenders to access information, to safely and freely express themselves, to issue recommendations and to access justice;
- Prepare a child-friendly version of the report.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDENV, CDCJ, CDPC, CMJ, CDENF, the North-South Centre.

External Partners:

National relevant ministries, relevant international organisations, national and international CSOs.

Strategic Objective 4

Preventing and prosecuting environment-related crimes



Action 4.1

Promotion of the signature, ratification and implementation of the CoE Convention on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law.

Expected Results:

- A significant number of member States sign the CoE Convention on the protection of the environment through criminal law;
- The Convention enters into force following ten ratifications (including eight member States);
- Within a year of the entry into force of the Convention, the monitoring body (the Committee of the Parties) starts working, strengthening co-operation between the Parties to ensure proper and effective implementation of the Convention;
- The Convention is promoted widely within member States and outside.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

PACE, Parliamentary Network for a healthy environment, Committee of experts on the protection of the environment through Criminal Law (PC-ENV), European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC).

External Partners:

Member States, UN/UNEP, EU, CSOs.

Action 4.2

The provision of guidance for the development of comprehensive policies and national strategies for the prevention and prosecution of environment-related crimes.

Expected Results:

- Design, promotion and implementation of interventions to provide guidance for the development of national strategies, resulting in at least five national strategies developed by the end of 2027.
- The guidance clearly identifies measures to be taken by different actors and agencies to ensure an effective response to environmental-related crimes. Since administrative and criminal law enforcement are complementary and interdependent, a clear

understanding of what might be the criminal and administrative measures in response to environmental crime are to be set out, and co-operation between all criminal and administrative law enforcement authorities should be promoted to ensure such an effective response.

- Examples of effective strategies on combatting environmental-related crimes will be provided, including setting of objectives and priorities, roles and responsibilities of competent authorities, resources needed, and mechanisms of regular evaluation of results, and links with international networks working on matters directly relevant to the prevention and prosecution of environment-related crimes.

Council of Europe bodies Involved:

CDPC, Consultative Council of European Judges, Consultative Council of European Prosecutors.

External Partners:

National authorities, international organisations (e.g. UNODC), EU as a partner and donor, CSOs involved during the negotiations of the Convention on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law.

Action 4.3

Development of cooperation on the role of judges and prosecutors in environment-related cases.

Expected Results:

- Increased number of trained and specialised judges and prosecutors in environment-related cases;
- A clear and more uniform understanding of the role played by judges and prosecutors in environment-related cases in order to maximise the professionalism and effectiveness of the enforcement chain, performed by means of co-operation mechanisms to exchange best practices and information.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDPC, Consultative Council of European Judges, Consultative Council of European Prosecutors (CCPE), legal professional networks.

External partners:

Judiciary, Law Enforcement authorities, Judges' and Prosecutors' Academies and Legal Professionals Networks such as the European Judicial Training Network, and European Judicial network, EuroJust.

Action 4.4

Exploring measures to enhance corporate accountability.

Expected Results:

- Measures are explored through co-operation and information-sharing, with the aim to provide for a common pan-European approach to ensure/enhance corporate accountability, and fight impunity minimizing the risk of forum shopping.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDPC.

External Partners:

National authorities, International Organisations (including ICC, UNODC), CSOs.

Strategic Objective 5

Protecting wildlife, ecosystems, habitats and landscapes



Action 5.1

Launching the 9th Session of the Landscape Award (2025-2026) and awarding a new project.

Expected Results:

- Through the award, awareness is raised on the importance of landscapes, and exemplary practices in the implementation of the Landscape Convention will be showcased.
- Greater public participation in the decision-making process concerning landscape policies is encouraged.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDENV and Standing Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP).²

External Partners:

National, regional and local authorities, CSOs, local communities.

Action 5.2

Adoption and promotion of the implementation of a Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on “Landscape and Health”.

Expected Results:

- Political recognition of the strong connection between landscape and health.
- The Parties to the Council of Europe Landscape Convention receive guidance on how to integrate landscape and health considerations in their policies, as well as other policies with possible direct or indirect impact on the landscape and health.

² Under the Revised Terms of Reference of Intergovernmental Structures for 2026–2027, adopted on 18 November 2025, the CDCPP became the Steering Committee for Culture and Cultural Heritage (CDCULT), and landscape matters were transferred to the new Steering Committee on the Environment (CDENV).

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDCPP.

External Partners:

UNESCO, OECD, OSCE, EFTA, ALECSO, UNECE, ICCROM, Professional Associations/Foundations, CSOs.

Action 5.3

Informal Ministerial Conference on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Council of Europe Landscape Convention and follow up to the implementation of the Convention.

Expected Results:

- Strengthening of the Landscape Convention and alignment with the priorities outlined in the Reykjavik Declaration;
- Showcasing the Convention's successes inspires action within member States and helps to outline the Convention's future trajectory;
- Implementing the Florence Declaration of 28 October 2025;
- Organising a Conference/ Workshop for fostering cooperation between states Parties on Impact of Climate change on Landscapes;
- Organising the 13th Conference on the implementation of the Landscape Convention.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDENV, CDCPP, CDCULT, Congress, PACE, CINGO.

External Partners:

Italian Ministry of Culture, local and regional authorities.

Action 5.4

Preparation and adoption of a draft Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on "Landscape, a living environment".

Expected Results:

- Defining what constitutes a 'living environment,' with consideration of democratic participation and the balance between rights related to landscape and the environment;
- Provision of guidance for enhancing the involvement of local communities in planning and management of land-use, increasing the adaptability of landscape to natural hazards, the preservation and restoration of natural habitats.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDENV, CDCPP, CDCULT and CINGO.

External Partners:

UNESCO, OECD, OSCE, EFTA, ALECSO, UNECE, ICCROM, Professional Associations/Foundations, CSOs, including Youth organisations.

Action 5.5

Reinforcing the impact of the Bern Convention, in particular in the context of the case-file system.

Expected Results:

- Specific recommendations from individual Case Files are better known, are followed up and acted upon;
- Admissibility criteria and rules of procedures on case-files are revised and improved;
- Cases are resolved and closed within a reasonable timeframe, taking into account any advice provided by the Standing Committee.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

Standing Committee and Bureau of the Bern Convention.

External Partners:

European Commission, Civil Society Complainants.

Action 5.6

Development of guidelines and considering adoption of a recommendation by the Committee of Permanent Correspondents of the EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement on citizen-centred prevention and preparedness in the face of natural hazards connected to climate.

Expected Results:

- The guidelines and a recommendation will assist member States in enhancing citizen-centred prevention, as well as improving protection and preparedness against major natural hazards connected to climate.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

Committee of Permanent Correspondents and network of scientific centres to the EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement, CINGO, Joint Council on Youth.

External Partners:

UN Disaster Risk Reduction, European Commission (DG ECHO), CSOs, including Youth organisations.

Action 5.7

Preparation of a study to assess the relevance of the animal welfare conventions.

Expected Results:

- The study will present the status and added value of the existing CoE conventions on farming, transport and experimentation of animals;
- The results will guide decisions concerning the promotion of these conventions.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDENV.

External Partners:

EU, OIE, CSOs.

Action 5.8

Promote the implementation of the measures included in the Report on “Local and regional responses to natural disasters and climate hazards: from risk preparedness to resilience”.

Expected Results:

- Guidance prompts coordination of all levels of governance in member States to work in solidarity to ensure the preparedness, information and coordination required to mitigate the impact of natural disasters and climate hazards.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

Congress.

External Partners

National, regional and local authorities in the member States.

Action 5.9

Support for the implementation of the recommendations included in the report on “Fostering a circular economy at local and regional levels”.

Expected Results:

- Local and regional governments are guided and better able to promote the circular economy as a model for longevity and the proper use of natural resources at sub-national level. The objective is to address environmental and economic sustainability

and strengthen the realisation of human rights by promoting equitable resource distribution, fostering inclusive participation in economic opportunities, and supporting healthier environment.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

Congress.

External Partners:

Local and regional authorities in the member States.

Action 5.10

Enhancing ratification of the Landscape Convention by all Council of Europe member States.

Expected Results:

- Seeking ratification by all Council of Europe member States;
- Promoting ratification by non-member States of the Council of Europe.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDENV, CDCULT, Congress, PACE, CINGO.

External Partners:

UNESCO, OECD, OSCE, EFTA, ALECSO, UNECE, ICCROM, Professional Associations/Foundations, CSOs.

Action 5.11

Role of cultural heritage and local communities in ensuring the sustainability of landscapes, ecosystems and territories.

Expected Results:

- Local and regional governments are guided and better able to promote the circular economy as a model for longevity and the proper use of natural resources at sub-national level. The objective is to address environmental and economic sustainability and strengthen the realisation of human rights by promoting equitable resource distribution, fostering inclusive participation in economic opportunities, and supporting healthier environment.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

Advisory Forum on Cultural Routes, Congress.

External Partners:

Local and regional authorities in the member States; member States ministries of culture and of the environment.

Action 5.12

Study on soft mobility (non-motorised or low-impact travel modes) along the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

Expected Results:

- Reduction of motorised travel modes along the Cultural Routes through the assessment of the state of soft mobility within certified Cultural Routes; drafting of concrete recommendations and actionable strategies for stakeholders.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

Advisory Forum on Cultural Routes.

External Partners:

Local and regional authorities in the member States; member States ministries of culture and of the environment.

Action 5.13

Policy guidance and advice on capacity building measures for the adoption of Nature-based Solutions and ecosystem-based approaches embedded in the broader governance structures.

Expected Results:

- Prepare a policy guidance and advice on capacity building measures for the adoption of Nature-based Solutions and ecosystem-based approaches embedded in the broader governance structures by December 2026.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDENV and relevant bodies.

Action 5.14

Consolidated review of the Council of Europe work on the protection and conservation of wildlife, ecosystems and protection, management and planning of landscapes, in co-operation with the relevant structures of relevant Conventions and other Intergovernmental Organisations.

Expected Results:

- Prepare a Consolidated review of the Council of Europe work on the protection and conservation of wildlife, ecosystems and protection, management and planning of

landscapes, in co-operation with the relevant structures of relevant Conventions and other Intergovernmental Organisations by December 2027.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

CDENV, Standing Committee of the Bern Convention and other relevant bodies.

External Partners:

EU, UN, other relevant Intergovernmental Organisations and CSOs

Mainstreaming of Environmental objectives and concerns in Council of Europe governance and operations



Action M.1

Implementation of the Road map for sustainable development and carbon footprint reduction within the Council of Europe and of the Action Plan for sustainable development within the Council of Europe.

Expected Results:

- More sustainable practices and reduced carbon footprint thanks to changes in consumption patterns, travel policy, purchasing goods and services policy, choice of materials, energy efficiency, etc.

CoE bodies involved:

Directorate General of Administration (DGA) in cooperation with relevant services (Sustainable Development Study Group (GEDD)).

Coordination, consultation and communication



Action C.1

Development of a specific web pages on the Environment.

Expected Results:

- Access to environment-related standards, policies and developments is facilitated.

CoE bodies involved:

Secretariat of the Reykjavík Process, Directorate of Communications and other sectors concerned.

Action C.2

Publication of various materials (books, leaflets, flyers, factsheets, including of a (ISBN) book featuring key aspects of the Council of Europe work in the field of the environment (key treaties, case law and decisions of monitoring bodies, key recommendations, the Strategy, etc.).

Expected Results:

- Increased visibility of Council of Europe work in this field.

Council of Europe bodies involved:

Directorate of Communications, Secretariat of the Reykjavík Process, other sectors concerned.

Action C.3

Raising awareness of Council of Europe's work on environment and human rights.

Expected Results:

- Increased knowledge by stakeholders of Council of Europe work in this field;
- Increased cooperation with other Intergovernmental Organisations;
- Participation in UN Climate Change Conferences (COPs).

Council of Europe bodies involved:

All sectors of the Council of Europe having activities on environment and human rights.

External Partners:

UN, other relevant Intergovernmental Organisations and CSOs

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ALECSO	Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization
CCPE	Consultative Council of European Prosecutors
CDADI	Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion
CDCPP	Standing Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape
CDCULT	Steering Committee for Culture and Cultural Heritage
CDDEM	Steering Committee on Democracy
CDDH	Steering Committee for Human Rights
CDEDU	Steering Committee for Education
CDEJ	European Steering Committee for Youth
CDENF	Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child
CDENV	Steering Committee on Environment
CDPC	European Committee on Crime Problems
CEB	Council of Europe Development Bank
CEPEJ	European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice
CINGO	Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations of the Council of Europe
CM	Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe
CMJ/CCJ	Joint Council on Youth/Advisory Council on Youth
CoE	Council of Europe
Commissioner	Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights
Congress	Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DARE	Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe
DGA	Directorate General of Administration
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ECMI	European Centre for Minority Issues
ECRI	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
ECSR	European Committee of Social Rights
EDQM	European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines & Health Care
EDURES Toolkit	Education Resilience in times of emergencies and crisis toolkit
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
ENAR	European Network Against Racism
ENNHRI	European Network of National Human Rights Institutions
EQUINET	European Network of Equality Bodies
ERAC	European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture
ERRC	European Roma Rights Centre
ESC	European Social Charter
ESD	Education for sustainable development (UNESCO's education sector)
EU	European Union
EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement	European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement

EYF	European Youth Foundation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCNM	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
GC	Governmental Committee of the European Social Charter and the European Code of Social Security
GEC	Gender Equality Commission
GEDD	Sustainable Development Study Group
GME	Ad hoc Multidisciplinary Group on the Environment
ILO	International Labour Organization
LICRA	Ligue internationale contre le racisme et l'antisémitisme
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIE	World Organisation for Animal Health
OSCE/ODIHR	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
PACE	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
PC-ENV	Committee of experts on the protection of the environment through Criminal Law
RFDCD	Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture
SDGs	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime