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ICC ASP Statement

Your Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

It is my honour to speak to you today on behalf of EcoJustice.Earth, formerly known as Stop Ecocide Netherlands, and as a new member of the Coalition for the ICC.

We stand at a pivotal moment in history, where the scale of environmental destruction and the corresponding existential threat to life demands a legal response equal to its gravity.

The history of severe ecological harm serves as our shared warning: From the use of Agent Orange in Vietnam and the catastrophic Kuwaiti oil fires during conflict, and emerging peacetime threats such as the strategic depletion of transboundary water resources and deep-sea mining, these acts reveal a pattern of systemic impunity that undermines human security and planetary stability.

At EcoJustice, we recognise the power of criminal law to delineate what is morally acceptable. As such, we acknowledge the criminalisation of severe and either widespread or long-term environmental damage, or *ecocide*, as imperative to recognising the associated moral transgressions.

Our mission is clear: to shift from exploitation to sustainable coexistence, by holding those who perpetrate mass ecological harm to account under the rule of law. Through our flagship campaign, Generation EcoJustice, we provide the necessary legal groundwork and advocacy to accelerate the global movement for environmental justice ensuring it becomes broader and deeper in scope.

It is in this spirit we call on the international justice community to embrace long-term, principled accountability for the planet we share. Nature teaches us that survival is a story written in generations. If we are to honour that truth, our decisions must echo beyond the present.



Across the globe, we are beginning to see glimmers of this vision in action: states experimenting with stronger criminal accountability for environmental destruction. In Europe, for example, the Environmental Crime Directive is pushing the boundaries of criminal law in setting new standards for prosecuting environmental crimes, including “particularly serious offences” akin to ecocide.

In this regard, the ICC is also on the verge of an important development: the Office of the Prosecutor has undertaken a comprehensive review into whether it is already possible to address serious environmental damage under the existing crimes in the Rome Statute. The resulting Policy Paper, which the Prosecutor will launch on Dec 4th at the ASP, could be another breakthrough for global environmental justice.

We wholeheartedly support this development, and if, according to the OTP, the Rome Statute can indeed be leveraged for these cases, then we as Generation EcoJustice will actively implement the framework established by the Office in our field of work.

Consistent with this commitment, our input to the consultation on the Policy Paper last February urged the inclusion of ‘cultural heritage’ among the Policy’s key terms, the expansion of paragraph 29 of the draft Policy Paper on assessing the gravity of environment-specific factors and addressed the processing of communications filed pursuant to article 15 of the Rome Statute.

This would be a landmark step, but we must nevertheless continue to recognise the necessity of addressing legislative gaps. While some countries are making positive steps, there is no unified legal international response to the most egregious acts of environmental destruction in both peace and times of conflict.

Your Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

The future will judge not by intentions, but by actions, and by whether we, as a global community, had the courage to prosecute environmental harm with the seriousness it demands.

Together, we can transform criminal law into a powerful tool for ecological accountability, and not just to punish, but to prevent and restore. Future generations to come will ask: Did we act when we had the chance?

Let our answer be: Yes. Thank you.