



EU FORUM OF JUDGES FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
UE FORUM DES JUGES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

1. EUFJE Annual Conference 17-18 October 2025

2025 EUFJE ANNUAL CONFERENCE NATURE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION 17-18 OCTOBER 2025 — COPENHAGEN



The 2025 Annual Conference took place at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark (hybrid), on 17 and 18 October 2025.

The theme of the conference was "**Nature Conservation and Restoration**".

The conference featured presentations by representatives from the EU Commission on both recent developments in EU environmental policy and law and two major legal instruments of nature conservation and restoration: Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 of 31 May 2023 on deforestation-free products and Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 of 24 June 2024 on nature restoration.

We also heard about case law from the Court of Justice of the European Union and the European Court of Human Rights, as well as presentations on the Convention on Biological Diversity and emerging biodiversity case law by UNEP representatives.

We were then provided with a scientific aspect to include in the legal point of view with presentations by the European Environment Agency and the BIOVAL team.

Turning to EU national jurisdictions, we heard a presentation by the Center for Climate Change Law and Governance (CLIMA) team of the University of Copenhagen of the draft general report based on answers to the questionnaire on nature conservation and restoration from EUFJE members of various EU Member States, before hearing about national case law by judges from Spain, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, Latvia, Greece, and Hungary.

Finally, we went beyond EU borders and heard presentations on nature conservation and restoration in Ukraine, and on judicial safeguards for implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in the People's Republic of China.

You will find the detailed programme [here](#).

A report of the outcomes of the questionnaire is being prepared by CLIMA.

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2. EUFJE Board meetings and General Assembly

The EUFJE **Board** met on 22 March (online) and 18 October 2025 (in Copenhagen).

On 12 June 2025, EUFJE held an **extraordinary General Assembly** (online) to approve the annual accounts. The annual accounts were approved by the General Assembly and thereafter filed with the Court.

On 18 October 2025, EUFJE held its **General Assembly** in Copenhagen (hybrid).

At the General Assembly, EUFJE President Luc LAVRYSEN stepped down from Presidency due to his retirement as President of the Constitutional Court of Belgium in 2026, as well as Vice-President Keith LINDBLOM, due to his retirement as Senior President of Tribunals of England and Wales in 2025.

The General Assembly elected a new president and three new vice-presidents:

- Kari KUUSINIEMI, President of the Supreme Administrative Court of Finland, was elected President of EUFJE
- Karin DE ROO, President of the Flemish Council for Permit Disputes, Belgium, was elected Vice-President of EUFJE
- Faustino GUDIN RODRÍGUEZ-MARGARIÑOS, Judge, Criminal Court of Madrid No. 11, was elected Vice-President of EUFJE
- Evangelos CHRISTIAS, Judge at the Court of Appeal of Athens, Justice Counsellor at the Permanent Representation of Greece to the EU in Brussels, was elected Vice-President of EUFJE

The renewal of the mandate of Board Members Luca RAMACCI (vice-president), Fruzsina BÖGÖS (secretary-general), Claes-Göran SUNDBERG (treasurer), Laurence ABGRALL (auditor) was approved by the General Assembly.

The General Assembly approved the membership requests of 13 new members, from Belgium, Malta, Spain, Romania, the United Kingdom, Austria, and Italy.

President Luc Lavrysen and Vice-President Keith Lindblom became honorary members of the network.

The General Assembly acknowledged the change of EUFJE's registered address to: Koning Albert II-laan 15 bus 130, 1210 Brussels

3. Four Networks Activities

In 2025, the Networks worked on the organization of and participation in the **4 Networks Conference** held on 21-22 May 2025 in Bratislava, Slovakia, on the topic "Making the new Environmental Crime Directive work - Cooperation/Prevention/Enforcement." 16 EUFJE Members attended the conference in person, including 7 Members who participated as speakers and/or chairs, and several EUFJE Members attended online.

EUFJE also actively participated in IMPEL's 4 projects 2025-2027:

- The project "**Compliance assurance including ECD**", and in particular the organization of weekly webinars, from September 2025 to May 2026, on the provisions of the new EU Environmental Crime Directive 2024/1203 of 11 April 2024. EUFJE Network Manager and EUFJE Vice-President Faustino Gudín are members of the core team of the project. Several EUFJE Members were speakers at the webinars, and several Members attended the webinars on a regular basis or punctually.
- The project "**Artificial Intelligence and Environment Protection (ARTIC)**": two EUFJE Members are participating in the project.
- The project "**Geospatial Intelligence for Environmental Compliance Assessment (GIECA)**": two EUFJE Members are participating in the project, and attended the roundtable of GIECA on 20 May 2026, in Bratislava, Slovakia.
- The project "**Tackling Illegal Groundwater Drilling and Abstractions (TIGDA)**" initiated and led by IMPEL: two EUFJE Members are participating in the project.

4. Project BIOVAL

In 2025, one of the cases of 2024 using the BIOVAL tool to order compensation for damage to nature (Court of First Instance of East-Flanders, Oudenaarde division, 27/02/2024) was confirmed in appeal by the **Court of appeal of Ghent, 7 February 2025**. The Court noted that restoration in nature was impossible and prohibited by the law, applied the interpretation

principle *in dubio pro natura*, stated that the author of environmental damage cannot escape any obligation to repair, and confirmed that financial compensation could be ordered, using the BIOVAL methodology and compensation list, for a total of EUR 62,545.06, to be paid to the Flemish Environment and Nature Fund (MINA Fund).

BIOVAL was also **featured in the press** multiple times in 2025, with articles -based on interviews with BIOVAL team/EUFJE members in Belgium¹, France², Greece³, and on INBO's website.⁴

We presented BIOVAL at various events in 2025:

- IMPEL Nature Protection Expert Team, 19 February 2025
- Dutch officials, 6 March 2025
- EU Compliance and Governance Forum, 18 March 2025
- EU Wildlife Trade Enforcement Group, 2 April 2025
- Officials of the Brussels Region, 16 April 2025
- Gandaius Academy, University of Ghent, 15 May 2025
- 4 Networks Conference, Bratislava, 21-22 May 2025
- IMPEL Nature Protection Online Meeting, 20 June 2025
- Training on wildlife crime for judges, prosecutors and nature inspectors (IGO - Belgian Judicial Training Institute), 5 Sept. 2025
- IMPEL/4 Networks ECA-ECD Webinar Series, 30 Sept. 2025
- EUFJE Annual Conference, Copenhagen, 17-18 Oct. 2025
- IMPEL Nature Protection Expert Team meeting, 20 Oct. 2025

Furthermore, in 2025, BIOVAL took a step towards a **geographical expansion, with a workshop in Paris** on 2 December 2025, attended by investigators from the French Office for Biodiversity and the ministry, representatives of the environment police, judges, a member of a prosecutor's office, an environmental lawyer, academics/researchers. The workshop was aimed at presenting BIOVAL to French environmental law practitioners and discussing the possible adaptation of BIOVAL in France, included a practical exercise of applying BIOVAL to French case, and concluded with a consensus on the next steps towards the development of a list of compensation values for France. The week after, on 9 December 2025, EUFJE Network Manager presented BIOVAL to magistrates at the French National School of Magistrates, in the framework of their professional training on environmental law.

Finally, **the scope of BIOVAL was extended to vegetations (BIOVAL-V)**, a project that was funded by the Authority for Nature and Forests of Flanders (ANB), who worked with INBO and EUFJE to develop a formula for vegetations. EUFJE helped organize and participated in the 2 experts' workshops with the view of refining the formula, on 22 October 2025 and 15 October 2025, in Brussels.

¹ https://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20250123_94185670

² <https://www.actu-environnement.com/ae/news/outil-bioval-prejudice-ecologique-evaluation-interview-ariane-samson-divisia-forum-juges-environnement-ue-45920.php4>

³ <https://daily.nb.org/arthrografia/bioval-project-to-polytimo-nomiko-ergaleio-gia-tin-apotimisi-tis-perivallontikis-zimias/>

⁴ <https://www.vlaanderen.be/inbo/nieuws/bioval-wanneer-schade-aan-de-natuur-leidt-tot-een-schadevergoeding/?redirectNews=true>

5. Aarhus Convention activities

EUFJE participated in the [16th meeting of the Aarhus Convention Task Force on Access to Justice](#), in Geneva, on 18-19 February 2025, which focused on access to justice in cases related to chemicals and waste management, water quality and noise pollution. You can read the summary of key outcomes of the meeting [here](#)).

EUFJE also participated in the [29th meeting of the Convention's Working Group of the Parties \(WGP29\)](#), on 2-4 July 2025, in Geneva. You can read the summary of the key outcomes of the meeting [here](#).

EUFJE President also participated in the [8th session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention, 5th session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on PRTRs, and Joint High-level Segment and associated meetings](#), in Geneva, on 17-21 November 2025. You can read the [press release on the outcomes of the sessions](#).

On 19 March 2025, EUFJE Network Manager attended the Online Consultation with the UN Special Rapporteur on Toxics and Human Rights on Access to Justice and Effective Remedies in the Context of Toxics.

6. Conference of the French Society of Judges and Prosecutors for Environmental Justice (AFMJE)

EUFJE President Luc Lavrysen attended the [Conference of AFMJE on "Organised Environmental Criminality"](#), on 7 November 2025, at Université Paris Dauphine PSL, France, where EUFJE was also represented by EUFJE Auditor Laurence Abgrall, and EUFJE Honorary Member (and former Auditor) Françoise Nési.

7. Training

On 20-21 January 2025, EUFJE attended the European Judicial Training Network LOT4 Partner Annual Meeting and 2025 Training Needs Assessment (TNA) Exercise.

On 7 February 2025, some EUFJE members delivered training presentations at the British Institute of International and Comparative Law, Global Perspectives on Corporate Climate Legal Tactics - Judicial Training for European Judges ([Global Toolbox on Corporate Climate Litigation](#)).

On 21 February 2025, EUFJE President delivered a lecture at Antwerp University on environmental and climate law.

8. Other activities in 2025

- 18 March: TAIEX-EIR multi-country workshop on environmental compliance and governance
- 10 April: Implementation dialogue with EC Commissioner Roswall on environmental assessments and permitting
- 4-6 May: World Law Congress, New Generations and Rule of Law: Shaping the Future, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u-zlrJgJADc>
- 5-7 May: 4th IUCN WCEL World Environmental Law Congress, "Integrated Legal Protection of Air, Ocean and Land", Rabat, Morocco (online)
- 3-4 June: "Judges & Climate Change", organized by the National High Court of Brazil, online - [STJ holds international symposium on judges and climate change - https://www.youtube.com/live/LrEnykodw9I](https://www.youtube.com/live/LrEnykodw9I) - <https://www.youtube.com/live/MXN85flwO94>
- 5 June: Climate Law Conference, University of Budapest
- 12 June: Workshop for the transposition of Directive (EU) 2024/1203 on the protection of the environment through criminal law, Brussels
- 17 June: Strengthening Law Enforcement for the New Environmental Crime Directive Webinar, EnviCrime Academy
- 23–27 June: ESA Living Planet Symposium, Vienna, Austria. EUFJE presentation on "Legal Guarantees and Jurisprudential Frameworks for Satellite Geolocation in Environmental Criminal Proceedings: Towards an International Protocol".
- 6 June: IRDA Paris Annual Conference: « Les ressources du droit des affaires face au défi climatique »
- 2-4 September: Red Jaguar Network, Colombia
- 2-3 October: Panel on the interaction between human rights and environmental protection at the Conference organised by the Forum of Serbian Judges at Srebrno Jezero, Serbia, as part of the project on Human Rights and Sustainable Environment in South-East Europe initiated by the Council of Europe
- 8 October: IMPEL Waste & TFS Conference (online)
- 12-14 November: COP30 side-event "A Mandate for All: the Legal and Civic Imperative to Confront the Climate Emergency", hosted by Pace University's Elisabeth Haub School of Law and the Fundação Getulio Vargas Rio Law, together with the World Commission on Environmental Law - [A Mandate For All | Side Event COP30 | FGV Direito Rio](#)
- November: 4th international conference on the juridical protection of Yangtze River basin, organised by the Research Institute of Environmental Law of Wuhan University with Hubei Provincial Court in Wuhan (video presentation)
- 8-9 December: 3rd Annual EU CharterXchange, EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, "How to strengthen the EU Charter's role in climate litigation?" - [3rd Annual EU CharterXchange | European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights](#)