

***Motion in support of the recognition of Ecocide as an international crime***

**This Branch notes:**

1. The passing in 2024 by the Exeter UCU branch, and subsequently by UCU congress, of a motion titled “International and political influencing on climate and ecological emergency”.
2. The development of the concept of Ecocide, the potential stages in its establishment as an international crime, and the implications:
  - a. The proposed definition of Ecocide from the Independent Expert Panel for the Legal Definition of Ecocide: *“Ecocide means unlawful or wanton acts committed with knowledge that there is a substantial likelihood of severe and either widespread or long-term damage to the environment being caused by those acts”*;
  - b. That the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court can be amended to add Ecocide as a fifth crime, alongside the current four international crimes: Genocide, Crimes Against Humanity, War Crimes and Crimes of Aggression. The amendment process begins with one of the 124 states parties proposing an amendment;
  - c. That making Ecocide a crime can create an arrestable offence, and make those individuals responsible for acts or decision leading to severe environmental harm liable to criminal prosecution.

**This Branch believes:**

1. That the establishment of an international crime of ecocide will create:
  - a. greater care for the environment in decision-making by government and industry;
  - b. deterrence for investors and insurers from investing in projects causing environmental harm;
  - c. greater support for those that do take action to care for the environment;
  - d. greater enforcement and likelihood of meeting non-binding international agreements protecting the environment, such as the Paris agreement;
  - e. moral lines and a healthy social taboo around mass damage to nature.
2. That mass damage and destruction of ecosystems has led to the current climate and ecological emergency, putting the future of humanity and other living beings at risk, and that existing treaties, agreements and civil lawsuits have not been able to stop this destruction.
3. That it is time to introduce an international crime of Ecocide, for the lasting protection of all life on earth.

**This Branch resolves:**

1. To sign this [manifesto](#), and ask the UK government to publicly declare support for an international crime of Ecocide.
2. To ask the University of Exeter to similarly declare their support publicly.
3. To promote awareness of and constructive debate and action on establishing an international crime of Ecocide, in support of the lasting protection of all life on earth. This being achieved through members’ education, research, citizenship, external engagement and impact activities.