



# WORK PROGRAMME 2026

JANUARY 2026



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Developing frameworks to preserve ecosystem  
health and human wellbeing





# ABOUT ECOS

ECOS, Environmental Coalition on Standards, is an international NGO with a network of members and experts advocating for environmentally friendly technical standards, policies and laws.

We ensure the environmental voice is heard when they are developed and drive change by providing expertise to policymakers and industry players, leading to the implementation of strong environmental principles.



# 25 YEARS ON THE GREEN LINE TO STANDARDS

The science is clear: the world is in a climate emergency, and the triple planetary crisis is here to stay – unless we take urgent and sufficient action. Greenhouse gas emissions must fall dramatically, or warming could pass 2.9°C this century, which would have catastrophic consequences for our environment. Heatwaves, droughts and floods... it is time to act before it is too late.

Against a backdrop of political shifts, competing interests, and the stark realities of a changing climate, 2026 will be challenging in many ways – but hopefully still a year full of important milestones and steps forward for ambitious environmental protection.

The renewed focus on competitiveness and global competition must go hand-in-hand with environmental ambition. A true green industrial transformation will help with safeguarding of natural resources, biodiversity, social justice, and environmental health.

The world is now realising that circular economy, a concept so universally present, is a way forward in using resources more strategically and effectively for longer. We need to mainstream and promote this shared understanding, and ECOS will push at regional and international levels for a vision of circular economy where resources are used for a longer time. As international trade is being reshaped, enhancing circularity and ecological regeneration in global value chains must become a priority, with markets and trading partners opening to, and creating a level-playing field for toxic-free, low-carbon, climate-friendly solutions.

As the only environmental NGO systematically at the table where standards are developed, ECOS is perfectly placed to drive, define and assess how to drastically improve the environmental sustainability of key sectors and products. We will rely on our unique position and expertise to deliver and implement the green transition – one where environmentally ambitious policies are supported by robust standards, serving the environment, and protecting our planet.

Finally, 2026 will also mark our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We are looking forward to connecting with our members, partners, and friends, and celebrate our joint environmental wins. Be it banning harmful chemicals in TVs, mainstreaming ecodesign or ensuring reparability of our devices, we have been championing environmental change for a quarter of a century – and will keep doing so in the years to come.

**The renewed focus on competitiveness and global competition must go hand-in-hand with environmental ambition.**

In 2026, we will prioritise the following environmental areas:



## Industrial decarbonisation

Raising ambition and creating lead markets for low-carbon circular products



## Clean energy

An energy system that respects planetary boundaries



## Circular economy within ecological limits

A toxic-free, sustainable and just circular economy, minimising material footprint



## Environmental transparency

Setting the standard for reliable and accurate environmental information



## Nature protection and restoration

Developing frameworks to preserve ecosystem health and human wellbeing



# HOW DO WE WORK?

For 25 years now, ECOS has worked towards a healthy and clean environment, protected by robust rules that respect nature and its resources. Representing a network of more than 60 members worldwide, we bring our environmental expertise and vision to environmental discussions.



## Standardisation

We are the environmental voice in the standardisation system.



## Policy & advocacy

We advocate for a high level of environmental ambition for major legislative developments.



## Campaigns

We push for change to happen through numerous campaigns with members and partners.



## In standardisation

- We represent the environmental voice in the Standardisation System.
- We emphasise the need for robustness and environmental ambition in the development of key standards.
- We highlight that the standardisation system needs to be as open and inclusive as possible, at all levels.
- In Europe, we are recognised as an official partner. ECOS is one of the so-called “Annex III organisations” recognised by the Standardisation Regulation.
- In Africa, we work to build relationships with key partners and stakeholders that can support active engagement in standards. We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the African Organisation for Standardisation ARSO to do this.
- We are members of ETSI, partners of CEN and CENELEC, liaison organisations to ISO and IEC and members of both ITU-T and ITU-D.
- We emphasise the need for the development of certain missing standards that can help the implementation of crucial environmental policies or innovations.
- We make sure standards and policy objectives are compatible, as well as that policy ambition is not undermined by decisions made at standardisation level.
- We raise awareness and interest in the standardisation work, fostering greater involvement of environmental NGOs in standards-making.

### WHAT DO STANDARDS DO?

Standards can provide **important definitions**, determining, for example, how much biobased content a product should have to be called ‘biobased’, or what criteria are needed for packaging to be termed ‘reusable’. They can also **provide measurement methods** that will facilitate the **enforcement of policies**, for instance on how to assess product reparability.





## At policy level

- We bring our technical expertise to emphasise a high level of environmental ambition for major legislative and policy developments. We are there even before the legislative process starts, to help prepare the ground for discussion, and we closely follow the process from all the way through the final decisions. Finally, we remain present for the implementation phase, where the details that make or break environmental ambition are finalised.
- Internationally, we cooperate with the United Nations, as an accredited observer to the UN Environment Programme and its governing bodies, namely, the United Nations Environment Assembly, and as a member of the [One Planet Network](#), [Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction](#), [Buy Better to Build Better Coalition](#), and the [Cool Coalition](#). We also actively contribute to the Global Electronics Council's [EPEAT ecolabel](#).



## Through campaigns

- With the support of our extensive network of members and partners, we push for change to happen.
- We lead and contribute our expertise to campaigns in favour of certain measures or reorient others, be it on industrial decarbonisation, sustainable



- We work with the EU institutions, particularly as a member of the European Commission's Ecodesign and Energy Labelling Consultation Forum, the Expert Group on Ecodesign for Sustainable Products and Energy Labelling (the Ecodesign Forum), the High-Level Expert Group on Energy Intensive Industries, the CBAM expert group, High-Level Forum on Standardisation, and as an observer on the Committee on Standards.

products, plastic packaging or biodiversity standards. Nothing is too complex, or too technical – we translate difficult issues into engaging calls to action, motivating our audiences to support our work.

- We know that by joining forces with like-minded partners, we are maximising our impact, ensuring a cleaner environment for all.
- ECOS is active in a number of impactful alliances and campaigns such as the [Rethink Plastic alliance](#), [Break Free From Plastic](#), [Coolproducts](#), [Right to Repair](#), [Better Without Boilers](#), [Cool Heating Coalition](#), the [Alliance for Low-Carbon Cement & Concrete](#), [Platform for Electro-mobility](#), [Coalition for Energy Savings](#) and [Wardrobe Change](#), where we cooperate with other NGOs, companies, and researchers.



**We lead and contribute our expertise to campaigns to push for change and maximise our impact.**

# INCREASING GLOBAL REACH: ECOS AFRICA OFFICE

Environmental issues are interconnected and unconstrained by borders. We need global efforts that ensure environmental ambition – something ECOS will keep working towards as part of our strategy.

Our work focuses on bringing a holistic approach to tackling the triple planetary crisis the world is currently facing. This involves continuing to raise the environmental ambition of policies and standards, while acknowledging the differences and priorities based on geography and levels of development.

To strengthen our global reach, with a particular focus on the African region, the ECOS Africa office will contribute to the regional priorities guided by African Union's Agenda 2063, as well as national environmental strategies.

Building on our two and a half decades of success in shaping an effective and impactful ECOS ecosystem of members, experts and alliances in Europe and internationally, we are now working with African environmental stakeholders, coupling our expertise in standards and policy with their knowledge and experience, with the aim to reinforce collaborative participation in decision-making forums – both in standardisation and policy-making.



## OUR FOCUS IN 2026



Develop an **effective network** of members, experts, alliances, and key partnerships.

Foster **greater engagement of environmental stakeholders in Africa** in policy and standards.



Raise **awareness and build capacity** for engagement in standards and policy work.

In 2026, we will strive to develop synergies and impactful partnerships, fostering a complementary approach with our partners. Leveraging our status as key participants in European and international standardisation and policy making, we will also push for inclusiveness in developing environmental solutions, not least through growing the ECOS membership in Africa, experts' hub, and partnerships.

**In 2026, ECOS will seek to expand our impact and work in the African region, raising the environmental ambition in policies and standards across borders.**



# MAKING STANDARDISATION WORK FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

For 25 years, ECOS has been working to ensure effective representation of the environmental interest in standardisation. Standards are an important tool which, if robust and adequately used, can contribute to a healthy and clean environment. In the absence of mandatory requirements or binding commitments, standards play a central role in defining methodologies for companies and organisations to follow. International, regional and national standards are also an important mechanism for facilitating trade, including of environmental goods and services.

ECOS works to raise awareness about the need for new or revised standards for crucial environmental policies or innovations, emphasising the need for robustness and environmental ambition in policies and laws. We strive for the environmental voice to be heard when these important documents are developed, and for public policy ambition to be supported by high-quality standards.

We bring vision to national, regional and international discussions. We drive change by providing insights and expertise on strong environmental principles to both policymakers and industry players, and through building new partnerships with like-minded organisations worldwide. Our participation ensures that the standards developed can better contribute to a broad range of environmental challenges.

For the green transition to become a reality, standards need to be developed with a closer involvement by governments and societal stakeholders and should not solely be at the discretion of market players. This is why, beyond our efforts to improve the environmental ambition of standards, we work towards an inclusive and effective system, reinforcing the participation and rights of societal stakeholders.

In 2026, ECOS will continue this work and further target inclusiveness of the standardisation processes as a fundamental overarching principle, and ensure the environmental voice is heard across the standardisation landscape.

**We will focus our work on:**

## International level

- Increasing our presence in key international standardisation organisations, pushing for greater environmental know-how in the standards, as well as facilitating access to the standards development process for environmental stakeholders.
- Continuing as an active contributor to ISO's commitment to have more environmental stakeholders at the table (London Declaration).

- Seeking more partnerships worldwide, including with environmental actors and standards organisations.
- Promoting inclusiveness to facilitate our participation and collaboration in international standardisation groups.

## Europe - regional level

- Emphasising the importance of an effective revision of the Regulation 1025 on European Standardisation, and promoting the implementation of standardisation policy in the EU to ensure standards work for the environment by delivering an inclusive and strategic European Standardisation System in support of high environmental ambition.
- Providing technical expertise to and participating in the technical work for the development and revision of a wide range of European and international standardisation deliverables, as well as the assessment of standardisation needs to support EU laws and policies.
- Training of experts and ECOS network in standardisation, as well as informing our key audiences about European standards.
- Engaging with the European Standardisation Organisations and other relevant actors within the system to ensure standardisation serves public interest and supports sustainability.

## Africa - regional level

- Engaging with the African Regional standardisation organisations, particularly ARSO, as well as their members, to raise awareness on the importance of environmental expertise in the development of standards.

## National level

- Developing increasing awareness, capacity and engagement among national environmental NGOs in standardisation.
- Promoting the participation of environmental NGOs in national standardisation.
- Building meaningful partnerships at national level on common environmental challenges.

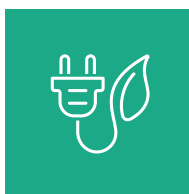
# OUR ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES

In 2026, we will prioritise five areas:



## Industrial decarbonisation

Raising ambition and creating lead markets for low-carbon circular products



## Clean energy

An energy system that respects planetary boundaries



## Circular economy within ecological limits

A toxic-free, sustainable and just circular economy, minimising material footprint



## Environmental transparency

Setting the standard for reliable and accurate environmental information



## Nature protection and restoration

Developing frameworks to preserve ecosystem health and human wellbeing

Our 2026 priorities will contribute to the attainment of the following Sustainable Development Goals:

### 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



### 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



### 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



### 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



### 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



### 13 CLIMATE ACTION



### 14 LIFE BELOW WATER



### 15 LIFE ON LAND



In this section, we will explore the crucial importance of these priorities for our environment, our objectives, and how we intend to deliver our work in these areas.



## OUR ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES

# Industrial decarbonisation

## Raising ambition and creating lead markets for low-carbon circular products

Industrial activities cause pollution, use large amounts of energy and require enormous quantities of precious raw materials. But above all, they are a main contributor to climate change, representing roughly a quarter of all greenhouse gas emissions worldwide. Unless we address these issues head-on, we will not meet our climate goals.

### Green transition will not happen without industrial decarbonisation

Industrial actors must play their part in reaching climate neutrality. We need a change of mindset, coupled with an ambitious - and effective - legislative and standardisation framework. Today, these are still lacking in environmental ambition, often protecting the status quo and impeding transparency and true environmental shift. It is time for a change – we need standards and legislation that promote low-impact materials, protect the environment and climate, encourage frontrunners, and provide fair and non-discriminatory access for all market actors.



### Policy and standards for a bulletproof solution

The (lack of) sustainability of the sector is linked to many factors, including a large variety of energy-intensive intermediate products (such as steel and cement) lack of circularity and transparency on their environmental impacts, or ineffective public procurement rules.

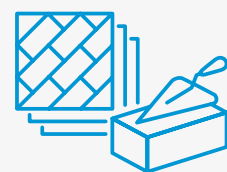
While certain environmentally damaging materials, such as plastic, receive a great deal of public attention, others, including such polluters as cement and steel, tend to fly under the radar. ECOS has long identified them as crucial on our path to decarbonisation. This is true for Europe, but even more so for developing regions, such as Africa, with a rapidly evolving landscape due to housing and infrastructure needs.



Industrial activities =  
**25%** of global  
GHG emissions



EU green public  
procurement could cut  
**40%** of emissions from  
steel and concrete



Construction products =  
**1/3** of all EU waste





The topic might be technical, but the solution is not more complicated than in other cases: we need to speed up decarbonisation, and foster circularity, aiming at net zero well before 2050.

Take cement and concrete: these construction all-rounders are steered by outdated, prescriptive standards: cement has direct market access based on its composition instead of its performance and function; the concrete standard extends this bias down the value chain. This must change: together with the [Alliance for Low-Carbon Cement & Concrete](#), we have been calling for a new generation of standards, which would align with relevant legislation, rely on neutral performance criteria, and – at last – open the market to low-carbon cement and concrete.

At the same time, we need reliable information on the environmental impacts of different materials and services along their entire life. Methods for calculating those impacts – which are often defined by standards – are being revised and they need improving. Only this way will the information become accurate and transparent, enabling end users to make informed and sustainable choices.



These choices are particularly critical when it comes to public spending, which covers the lion's share of the construction sector's demand. With public contractors' buying powers accounting for a staggering 14% of EU GDP, the need for green lead markets is increasingly recognised, not least by the 2025 Clean Industrial Deal. The implementation of the existing public procurement legislation in the majority of EU Member States leaves a lot of environmental potential untapped, especially in the construction sector. And, as [our 2024 study](#) clearly demonstrated, the stakes are high: a well implemented Green Public Procurement (GPP) framework could slash up to 40% of EU emissions from steel and concrete.



### OUR FOCUS IN 2026



Ensure EU **cement & concrete standards** are fit for purpose & create a level playing field for low-carbon products.

Revise the standard on how to **measure life-cycle impacts** of construction.



Create lead markets through **Green Public Procurement**.



## Our activities in 2026

- Inform discussions on a robust EU legislation and standards, setting environmental requirements (e.g. on circularity or emission limits) for construction materials, as part of the implementation of the Construction Products Regulation (CPR) and the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) for steel.
- Cooperate with the Alliance for Low-Carbon Cement & Concrete (ALCCC) to contribute to the revision of European cement and concrete standards (EN 197 series and EN 206 respectively), towards proper performance-based rules, to ensure a wide uptake of low-carbon cement and concrete on the market.
- Contribute our expertise to the overhaul of the key European standard defining rules to measure and disclose life-cycle impacts (LCA) of construction products, making LCAs more transparent, realistic and comparable.
- Together with the Buy Better to Build Better Coalition, promote GPP for construction products and emphasise the importance of the revision of the EU Public Procurement Directive to ensure it serves environmental goals.
- Work towards the decarbonisation of the steel sector, and help shape thinking on new policy measures and standardisation developments.
- Contribute insights on the new EU industrial and circularity frameworks – the Industrial Decarbonisation Accelerator Act and the Circular Economy Act, to ensure a place for waste prevention, reuse and high-quality recycling of construction materials.

## Who we work with





## OUR ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES

# Clean energy

### An energy system that respects planetary boundaries

In 2026, we still largely rely on fossil fuels, which are the main driver for greenhouse gas emissions and a primary cause of human-made climate change. We need to transition to a cleaner energy system – at a faster pace, and with better results.

We still mainly use coal, oil and gas to heat our homes, generate electricity, drive cars and power key industries but it does not end here: new sectors are now emerging, including the growing digital sector and resource-intensive and power-hungry data centres and electronic products. All of these, even if largely invisible to the human eye, put an enormous pressure on natural resources and contribute to the alarming status quo.

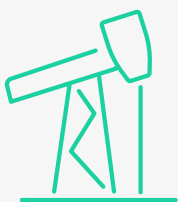
We cannot wait any longer: the energy sector needs a rapid transformation, and its decarbonisation should be a top priority. In parallel, we must make sure that the overall energy production and consumption is reduced in every sector, by means of energy efficiency and sufficiency measures.



We have reached a point when not even turning to renewable energy and electrification will be enough. The switch itself will not stop our strong reliance on natural resources, minerals and metals, used in such key clean energy technologies as batteries, heat pumps or electrolyzers. We need to substantially reduce our energy consumption and accompany the energy transition with a sufficient and circular approach.

### Renewable, circular and... sufficient approach

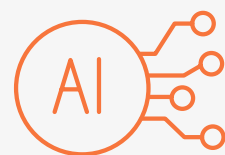
For years now, ECOS has been highlighting the need for an energy system based on renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and sufficiency. A system that is respectful of people, health and natural resources.



**50%** of global trade of materials in 2020 = fossil fuels



**15%** of climate impacts of the built environment come from metals



Training AI consumes as much electricity as over **1,000** U.S. households in a year





## “The energy sector needs a rapid transformation, and its decarbonisation should be a top priority.”

Policies and standards can help the shift by supporting the deployment of truly clean technologies, promoting energy sufficiency and responsible sourcing practices, while moving away from dangerous chemicals and unsustainable solutions that lock our energy system in dirty fossil energy sources.

As we accelerate the shift to renewable energy, we must also confront a new challenge: the growing demand for raw materials like lithium, cobalt, and rare earth elements, which are essential components in electric vehicles, wind turbines, and solar panels. While these materials are vital to powering cleaner technologies, their supply chains are often linked to severe environmental harm, pollution, and human rights violations – risks that could intensify without strong safeguards.

To ensure the energy transition is both clean and just, we aim to foster a coherent and responsible mineral governance that balances the increasing demand for raw materials with the imperative to protect the planet and its people.

An important part of the solution will be ensuring circularity of natural resources. They must be preserved,



retained, and managed in a socially respectful way, and strict circularity provisions set by regulations, and underpinned by ambitious standards, will be key.

While geopolitical tensions keep fuelling the existing economic and energy crisis, climate change is becoming a multiplier of instability. We must not delay action aimed at supporting the energy transition, ensuring resilience and protecting vulnerable communities.

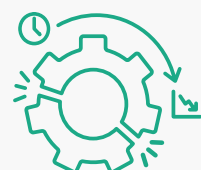


### OUR FOCUS IN 2026



**Renewable and efficient**  
key sectors (heating,  
transport, digital).

**Materials needed** for  
the energy transition  
(critical raw materials).





## Our activities in 2026

- Help advance a smart electrification of key sectors, such as heating and transport, and a renewable power system.
  - Work towards the deployment of renewable-based heating and cooling solutions, as well as policies and standards supporting efficient and F-gas-free heat pumps and cooling equipment.
  - Work towards standardised communication protocols which foster smart charging of electric vehicles and smart energy management, and ensure their uptake in relevant policies.
  - Work to tighten the energy efficiency thresholds and pollutant emissions of biomass heating in policies and standards.
  - Highlight the need for renewable hydrogen to be used only in hard-to-abate sectors, while highlighting the risks of increasing low-carbon hydrogen production, such as a perpetuated gas lock-in or misdirected investment in Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS). To do so, we will promote certification relying on science-based thresholds, robust calculation methodologies, and accurate, verifiable data.
- Emphasise the importance for policies, supported by standards, to set the ambition for reduced energy demand, including through improved energy efficiency and sufficiency measures.
- Help shape strategies for energy-related products and data centres to be efficient and circular, using ecodesign and energy labelling, and ensuring that the negative environmental impacts of emerging technologies such as AI are limited through sufficiency-oriented practices.
- Support energy transition policies that take a responsible, sufficient, non-toxic and circular approach.
- Make sure that policies and standards on raw material supply chains are responsible and take circularity

## Who we work with



EU Raw Materials Coalition

## Our projects





## OUR ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES

# Circular economy within ecological limits

## A toxic-free, sustainable, just circular economy that fits the planet

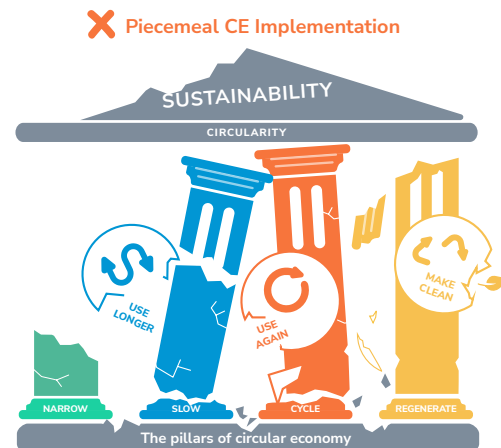
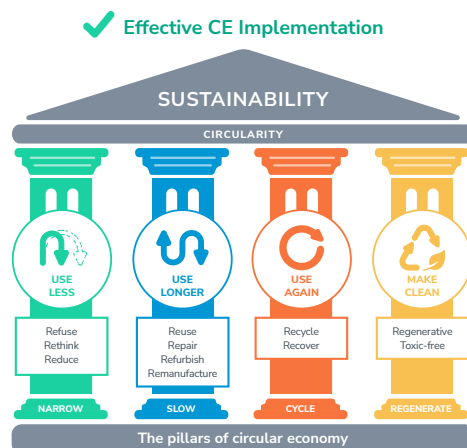
The existing production and consumption patterns are unsustainable and put stress on our fragile ecosystems. Resources are extracted, processed, consumed and thrown away at an ever-increasing pace. This, in turn, drives the triple planetary crisis – a combination of three interlinked issues: climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss. And we urgently need to tackle all three if we are to have a viable future on our planet.



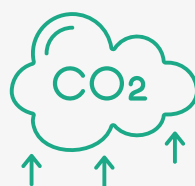
A truly transformative circular economy must operate within planetary boundaries and focus on reducing absolute resource use. Recycling or incremental efficiency gains alone will not get us there. We need to design production and consumption systems that minimise extraction, extend product lifespans, and prioritise reuse and repair over disposal. Such approaches not only cut material footprints but also help restore ecosystems and reduce social and environmental injustices linked to resource extraction.

### Circular economy pillars: no cherry-picking

In 2026, the European Union will be discussing the Circular Economy Act and its interlink with the Clean Industrial Deal.



EU could save annually  
**€1.8 trillion**  
by transitioning to  
a circular economy



Material resources  
extraction and processing  
= **55%** of global GHG  
emissions



In the past 5 years, we  
consumed almost **30%** of  
all the materials **humanity**  
consumed since 1900





At the same time, more and more countries in all geographies, including Africa, are adopting Circular Economy Plans. As we progress, it is crucial to remember that these policies must be built on the four foundational pillars of circularity: narrowing, slowing down, cycling, and regenerating resources. An incomplete approach risks creating unintended trade-offs and even exacerbating environmental impacts, ultimately undermining the very goals of the circular economy. Special attention should be paid to reducing the absolute use of resources, a strategy still missing in the existing EU legislation.



### A circular economy embracing sufficiency in global value chains

In 2026, ECOS will continue to ensure circular economy policies and standards contribute to reducing resource use and environmental pollution levels in resource-intensive value chains, such as plastics, textiles and electronics.

At EU level, we will highlight the need for an ambitious Circular Economy Act, as well as the Chemical Industry Package and subsequent measures. We will continue to work towards a robust implementation of the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation, a visionary policy framework meant to ensure products are sustainable by default, and the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation, a new set of rules to continue to promote refill and reuse systems, and reduce our dependence on single-use packaging. We will also contribute insights towards an environmentally ambitious revision of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive, the Waste Framework Directive and Landfill Directive, as well as the Bioeconomy Strategy.

## OUR FOCUS IN 2026



Product policies



Plastics



Textiles



Toxic-free products



Waste



## Our activities in 2026

- Elaborate the need for collaborative actions on the triple planetary crisis within the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) and help shape sector-specific policies at global level to reduce the environmental impacts those sectors have on the planet (starting with plastics and textiles).
- Highlight the need for policies and standards that unlock sustainable resource management and sufficiency.
- Contribute our expertise towards an ambitious Circular Economy Act, binding targets for the reduction in the use of resources and generation of waste, as well as separate waste prevention and reuse targets in the Waste Framework Directive and Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive.
- Ensure key product and material streams are long-lasting and non-toxic by design.
- Build understanding around the need for deep transformation of key sectors and products through an ambitious implementation of the EU Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR), including environmentally sound standards to support it, starting with textiles, furniture, tyres, iron and steel and enable EU citizens to access toxic-free, long-lasting and repairable products, also through a reinforced Right to Repair.
- Highlight the need for textile products to be more circular and sustainable by design, and for environmental hotspots in the sourcing and manufacturing of textiles to be addressed, by removing the worst performing products from the market, and by providing consumers with more and better information on the textiles that are sold in the EU.
- Work towards a dramatic reduction of packaging waste, focusing on packaging prevention, minimisation, and mainstreaming refill and reuse for the sector.

## Who we work with



One planet  
handle with care



RIGHT TO  
REPAIR



FAIR &  
SUSTAINABLE  
TEXTILES

EUROPEAN CIVIL SOCIETY STRATEGY



EDC FREE EUROPE  
LET'S STOP HORMONE DISRUPTORS



EUROPEAN ALLIANCE  
for a JUST TRANSITION

## Our projects





## OUR ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES

# Environmental transparency

## Setting the standard for reliable and accurate environmental information

Environmental transparency must become a global policy priority. It allows companies to demonstrate integrity, and commitment to improve over time; and consumers or investors to compare the environmental performance of businesses. It also creates demand for better performing products, which, in turn, continuously raises the bar on environmental protection. Finally, it allows companies to transparently communicate their environmental pledges and civil society organisations to hold them accountable for their (lack of) engagement.

There is a caveat of course: environmental transparency tools such as green claims or corporate reporting are only as strong as the data and methodologies behind them. This is why it is crucial to ensure that all information is reliable, comprehensive, comparable and environmentally relevant.

### We have achieved a lot...

The EU provides an encouraging case study of progress. Sustainable processes, nature-positive companies, responsible investments, green bonds, carbon neutral



packaging... Soon enough, businesses will need to think twice before they self-award such a label.

Policymakers as well as NGOs such as ECOS, noticed the need to curb the proliferation of environmental claims on products and services. Thanks to progressive legislation, consumers will soon be less exposed to greenwashing. Environmental claims will be regulated, with some of the most notorious ones (such as 'climate-neutral' products) will be effectively banned. In parallel, corporate sustainability reporting has become more mainstream, nudging companies to implement comprehensive environmental strategies.



**76%** of products on EU market carry a **green claim**



**50%** are misleading, unsubstantiated or inaccurate



**92%** of global GDP is covered by **net-zero pledges**





### ...but so much more remains to be done!

The environmental community has applauded these changes, but we must not rest here: so much remains to be done. Without strong enforcement mechanisms, misleading and inaccurate environmental information will continue to be an obstacle to the green transition. In fact, transparency and accountability are often still perceived as a burden or a 'nice-to-have', rather than an absolute must, which will allow companies to monitor their ability to contribute to the transition and continuously improve.

We need strict regulations and provisions on how to design corporate transition plans to accompany long-term thinking and ambitious target setting, what companies may or may not claim, and how to best share this information with their customers, investors, public procurers and regulators.

Functional environmental transparency tools will also help disclose the true environmental costs of raw materials, production processes and products. Only this way can we ensure that sustainable practices, products and companies truly get the recognition they deserve.



### OUR FOCUS IN 2026



Tools allowing companies, investors, policymakers, and consumers to **calculate and communicate their true environmental impacts**.

Mainstreaming of these tools in high-impact sectors, such as **construction, energy, textiles, or food**.



“It is crucial to ensure that all information is reliable, comprehensive, comparable and environmentally relevant.”







## Our activities in 2026

- Support the adoption of standards, guidelines and policy frameworks at international, European and national levels to ensure a transparent, reliable, and relevant environmental communication.
- Debunk narratives promoting false solutions, or giving partial environmental information.
- Counter using our expertise marketing that promotes climate-, plastic- or any other 'environment-neutral' product or company relying on environmental credits or offsets.
- Ensure that environmental assessment methodologies such as the Product Environmental Footprint and ISO Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) standards reflect the true impacts of product.
- Work to develop supply chain transparency tools, such as the EU Digital Product Passport and strong chain of custody requirements.
- Ensure the uptake of strong carbon accounting methodologies in international and European standards.
- Highlight the need for voluntary sustainability schemes to raise their environmental ambition and transparency.
- Contribute expertise to develop standards and emphasise the importance of policy frameworks allowing to identify green investment opportunities and assets.
- Promote the adoption of credible and transparent transition plans for businesses, in line with science-based targets.
- Promote the importance of, where relevant and meaningful, the development of product scores to be displayed visibly and clearly for consumers, to ensure the uptake of sustainable products.

## Who we work with



**One planet**  
handle with care



**Alliance for  
Corporate  
Transparency**



**INDEPENDENT  
SCIENCE BASED  
TAXONOMY**



## OUR ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES

# Nature protection and restoration

## Frameworks for nature and human health to thrive

The triple planetary crisis we face today – climate change, pollution and nature and biodiversity loss – stems from an unsustainable pressure on our ecosystems, driven by expanding production and consumption that encroach upon the natural world.

We must take urgent action, shifting from a narrow focus on carbon to a holistic one, that prioritises both human and ecological well-being while halting biodiversity collapse. This ecological transition must be inclusive, engaging local communities and land managers to safeguard their health and livelihoods, while helping reduce pressure on nature and restore vital ecosystem functions.

### Protect, reduce, restore

Enabling healthy and thriving nature and ecosystems is a key priority for ECOS. We advocate for an absolute reduction of pressure on nature, while protecting and restoring biodiversity, enhancing the recognition of ecosystem functions, and improving the ecological health of soil, air and water.



Achieving this vision requires robust laws, complemented by strong standards that ensure the ecological, circular and fair use of nature's resources. These efforts must be supported by an economy that is regenerative and distributive by design, underpinned by standards which support nature restoration. We must also ensure that definitions, targets, and methodologies drive a meaningful reduction in pollution, resource extraction, production, and consumption.

The United Nations Global Biodiversity Framework and the EU Nature Restoration Regulation have already set ambitious targets. Now, governments must provide the necessary policies, financing, guidance, and tools to ensure their success. These frameworks require consistent monitoring and reporting, which only robust standards can guarantee. ECOS will be there every step of the way.



**2021-2030**  
decade of **ecological**  
**restoration**



Happening now:  
**6<sup>th</sup> mass extinction**  
in geological history



**95%** of our food  
comes from **soil**



### In 2026, ECOS will focus its efforts on:

- Biodiversity, enabling the ambitious implementation of existing nature protection and restoration laws with the support of robust biodiversity assessments.
- Forests, contributing to the development of laws and standards that support ecological forest management practices and a biodiversity- and climate-friendly use of forest resources.
- Agriculture and food systems, supporting policies and standards for sustainability assessment, environmental labelling and green public procurement criteria on agri-food products, land monitoring, as well as requirements in support of agroecology and human well-being.
- Soil health, promoting the robust implementation of key soil-related legislation and contributing to the development of standards for the sustainable management of soils as ecosystems.
- Bioeconomy, reducing its impacts, integrating protection and restoration of nature in production practices, operationalising the cascading use principle, supporting management approaches that truly aligned with ecological principles, and avoiding regrettable material substitution effects.



**These frameworks require consistent monitoring and reporting, which only robust standards can guarantee.**

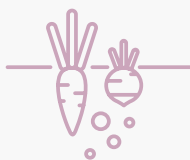
### OUR FOCUS IN 2026



Biodiversity



Forests



Agriculture and food systems



Soil health



Bioeconomy



## Our activities in 2026

- Highlight the need for policymakers to protect biodiversity and soil health in a just and inclusive way through binding legislation.
- Support the effective implementation of policy measures for monitoring ecosystems with robust standard methodologies.
- Emphasise the role for policies, standards, labelling and certification in supporting nature protection and restoration, agroecology, ecological forestry, and sustainable food and forest products, integrating nature protection and restoration in agriculture and forestry practices.
- Help eliminate imported deforestation from agriculture and wood harvests, and reduce pressure on forests via the implementation of the cascading use principle.
- Call for a better recognition and accounting of impacts on soil and biodiversity including in forests and farms, in policy, standards and life-cycle analysis tools.
- Support fair and robust funding and financing for land managers to protect and restore ecosystems, ensuring these provide reliable incomes and do not rely on offsetting and greenwashing of corporations' continued destruction of nature.
- Support the effective implementation of ecosystem monitoring frameworks supported by science-based standard indicators and measurement methodologies as a means to support ecological land management practices and stop deforestation and forest degradation.
- Encourage the development of, and contribute our expertise to, ambitious standards and voluntary initiatives that promote agroecology and sustainable food diets.

## Who we work with





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