

# Annual Review 2023

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH EUROPE

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Participants of the Annual General Meeting 2023 in Albania © FoE Europe

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## Friends of the Earth Europe Executive Committee 2023-2024

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) took place in Divjaka, Albania, hosted by FoE Albania. The AGM elected the following members to the Executive Committee (ExCom) for the period 2023-2025: Cathérine Mollière from FoE France, Tihomir Dakic from FoE Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Marilin Eessalu from FoE Estonia.

Anna Kárníková from FoE Czechia (chair), Ákos Éger from FoE Hungary (treasurer), Martin Galea De Giovanni (secretary) from FoE Malta, and Davit Sidamonidze from FoE Georgia stayed on in the ExCom as their mandate is running from 2022-2024. Davit Sidamonidze resigned from the ExCom in spring 2024.

# Environmental and Social Justice Hand-in-Hand



JAGODA MUNIC,  
Director, Friends of  
the Earth Europe

May 2024




**We campaign for social and environmental justice at the heart of the EU**



**We unite more than 30 national groups and thousands of local groups across Europe**



**We are part of Friends of the Earth International, the world's largest grassroots environmental network.**

**In 2023 we saw the ugly face of the climate crisis in Europe: from the EU's largest ever recorded forest fire in Greece, the landslide disaster in Georgia, to massive rains causing havoc in Slovenia, Norway, and Sweden. Russia's invasion of Ukraine continued, heightening the sense of horror and insecurity throughout Europe while also impacting living costs – in particular the cost of energy and food. We witnessed harrowing violence in Gaza and Israel. We demand an immediate ceasefire, an end to the occupation and a fair, just, and lasting solution for the Palestinian people.**

Our hearts are broken. We want to build a peaceful, just, and sustainable world based on societies living in harmony with each other and with nature. We might be dreamers, but visionaries are badly needed in this decade that needs urgent climate action, and where international cooperation and solidarity is essential to implement such action. It is badly needed when many of our political leaders are driving in a very dangerous direction.

Politically in Europe, 2023 was a year of backlash against environmental and climate ambitions. With the European Parliament elections coming up in June 2024, European political actors on the right, hand-in-hand with corporate interests, started their election campaigning early by instrumentalising environmental and climate legislation for populist gains. Despite significant resistance, we witnessed very worrying push-backs on pesticides, on corporate due diligence, and on nature restoration.

However, as environmental justice activists, we are not giving in to despair and pessimism. It is our job to look for solutions, show the way forward, and create sparks of hope. In spite of the challenging context, we in 2023 achieved major milestones through campaigning and mobilising for social and environmental justice:

- We have been demanding a ban on disconnections as a key step toward tackling Europe's energy poverty crisis– and achieved an important win as it was included in the Electricity Market Redesign.
- Our work on questioning the systematic economic growth dependency took a big jump with the European Parliament Beyond Growth Conference. As a testament to our work, Commission president Ursula von der Leyen said at the conference: "GDP measures everything except that which makes life worthwhile. Economic growth is not an end in itself." – a significant shift in narrative coming from the innermost workings of the European institutions.
- We have been campaigning for years for the EU and member states to leave the climate-wrecking Energy Charter Treaty. In 2023 several Member States announced they were leaving the ECT, and the Commission proposed a collective EU withdrawal.
- We continued campaigning against the EU-Mercosur trade deal, emphasising its harmful impacts on the environment, local communities, human rights, and democratic processes, and contributed to secure a delay in the ratification of the deal.

In 2024, more voters than ever in history will cast their votes in national elections, the results of which, will be consequential for years to come. Polls are indicating that many countries will vote for a shift towards more conservative political leaders. The European Parliament elections will kick off a new political cycle of the European Union, and the burning question is whether the European Green Deal will be shelved, or whether environmental policies will become more ambitious and socially just.

Now is absolutely not the time to slow down the EU's ambition for the environment and the climate, as some propose. At Friends of the Earth Europe we will, jointly with our members across Europe, our partners and allies, continue defending and championing the interests of people and planet with passion, boldness and expertise – as we have for decades. Now, more than ever, we have to show how environmental and social justice go hand-in-hand, and deliver sustainable and just solutions for the benefit of everyone.

# Campaign Highlights 2023

## Climate justice and energy

In 2023 we continued to push for climate justice and a just transition at the highest levels of the EU leadership. We advocated for the EU to take a position in favour of a fossil fuel phaseout at the COP28 negotiations in Dubai. The European Commission supported this initiative, but unfortunately, it was not adopted by the EU Council. We also supported the Friends of the Earth International team at the COP28 negotiations, helped prepare our member groups for the climate talks, and spread the messages from our global network to a European audience.

We made significant progress on the objectives of our work on energy. We actively shaped European energy legislation, generating a broader and more coordinated civil society voice by bringing together the social and environmental dimensions.



FoE International protesting at COP 28 © FoE International

*We want the EU to set a deadline for phasing out fossil fuels. The EU will have to stop using them well before 2050 and well before developing countries, because of our historical responsibility for climate change.*

**Colin Roche**, climate justice & energy coordinator commented to [Radio Canada](#).

## End energy poverty now



© Philip Reynaers / FoE Europe

Energy Poverty has been high the European political agenda 2023, with a [ban on disconnections](#) as a central demand on our part. After tireless advocacy with the [Right to Energy coalition](#), allies and friends, the year ended with a bang - a ban on disconnections was included in the Electricity Market Redesign.

The Right to Energy Forum, an essential hub for civil society coordination on energy poverty, brought together 500 participants, including MEPs from across party groups.

*After our latest winter of crisis, we can no longer tolerate a situation where millions are left unable to afford the energy, they need to live safe, dignified lives. We need a ban on disconnections as a key step toward tackling Europe's energy poverty crisis.*

**Kieran Pradeep**, energy justice campaigner in [iNews](#)

We engaged in advocacy throughout the year, sharing our concerns and demands regarding the energy poverty policies in the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD). We had some success! The agreed text of the EPBD includes some positive provisions that will help people living in energy poverty to benefit from renovations.

Together with CAN Europe we founded the Build Better Lives campaign uniting social, housing, climate and youth movements to promote the need for more energy efficient buildings that can improve millions of people's lives throughout Europe.

*While emergency action was needed we cannot allow short sighted measures to lock us in policies that will not help us in the long term. With the proposed energy efficiency rules for buildings ministers had missed a golden opportunity to match our climate goals with tackling the energy crisis.*

**Laia Segura**, energy justice campaigner, FoEE and **Javier Tobías**, ECODES in Euronews

## Build Better Lives



© Johanna de Tessieres / FoE Europe

## Gas - a burning issue

Our advocacy and campaigning for a gas phaseout contributed to changes in the regulation on Trans-European Networks for Energy, the EU gas package, and the general discourse of European decision makers in relation to ending the use of fossil fuels.

*"The recent Eurostat data shows us that it is in fact possible to loosen the tight grip that fossil fuels have on our energy system. This should be a real wake up call for our decision makers; our energy system can be radically changed, and even faster than we imagined! /.../ We need to make sure we continue to drive reductions of gas consumption, but critically that the energy poor are protected and urgently provided with real non-fossil fuel solutions..."*

**Eilidh Robb**, fossil fuel campaigner in ENDS Europe



© Abdesslam Mirdass / Hans Lucas

The European Community Power, a coalition of more than 50 organisations advocating for community energy from across Europe, celebrated its tenth anniversary. The achievements of the coalition was celebrated at an event hosted at the European Parliament in September.

Our advocacy work contributed to the Electricity Market Design, ensuring legal clarity and concrete provisions for energy sharing, empowering energy communities and individuals to participate in the energy system.

## A decade of community power



© FoE Europe

## Campaign Highlights 2023

### Food, farming and nature

With members and allies, we arduously advocated for policies that make food systems more sustainable and called out the root causes of biodiversity loss. We denounced the delays on and weakening of key policy files on food, farming, and nature.

We mobilised citizens to maintain new GMOs labelled and safety-checked and engaged new stakeholders and experts into the public debate on pesticides. We worked on the need to regulate industrial animal farming, and implement the regulation for deforestation-free products. We co-organised solidarity actions against projects that would cause damage to nature and local populations, such as the extension of the Struma motorway in Bulgaria and the growing number of hydroelectric projects in Europe.



© POLLINIS

*When are policy-makers going to wake up and stop choosing a toxic industry's interests over the citizens they're supposed to represent?*

**Clara Bourgin**, food, agriculture, and nature campaigner in Politico

We campaigned on key files related to the EU Biodiversity Strategy such as the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulation, and took part in campaigning activities around the Nature Restoration Law. While we did some great work to increase public awareness on key threats to biodiversity in the EU through traditional and social media, the political opposition, and the corporate lobby against these important files led to them being rejected in the European Parliament.

## Pesticides at the eye of the storm



© Quentin Hugo / The Left

*When certain MEPs strongly push back against EU pesticide law and binding reduction goals, and more broadly against European environmental commitments, it's clear that intensive industry lobbying is behind it.*

**Clara Bourgin**, food, agriculture and nature campaigner in [De Smog](#)

## GMO Excuse Generator



© FoE Europe

Ahead of the publication of the draft legislation on new GMOs, to push back on far-reaching deregulation, we coordinated a letter to European Green Deal Commissioner Timmermans and mobilised more than 300 organisations to sign it, leading to a meeting with Timmermans. Unfortunately, the draft legislation erased environmental safety checks, transparency, and monitoring. Ahead of Council debates, we published briefings on corporate influence of the legislation, on labelling of new GMOs and on greenwashing. [We launched a creative online campaign tool](#) using Artificial Intelligence to raise awareness on the absurd excuses to why new GMOs cannot be labelled.

*...it was essential labelling requirements remain so that consumers could make informed choices. The need to label has effectively prevented sales of GM food items to EU consumers.*

**Mute Schimpf**, food and farming campaigner in [Reuters](#)

We facilitated learning and exchange on digital farming with our allies. Peasant farmers already face highly concentrated markets for seeds, pesticides and fertilizers, and now a handful of corporations seek to gain further control over farms through big data. We countered claims from policy makers, corporate interests, and some researchers about the necessity of digitalising agriculture and published a report on Remote control and peasant intelligence to stir debate on the topic.

## Decoding digital farming



© Kiko Romero and Maria Romero Blasco / FoE Europe

# Campaign Highlights 2023

## Resource Justice & Sustainability

In 2023, we made powerful progress on tackling resource overconsumption: as civil society we became more organised; the Belgian incoming EU Presidency made it a priority to call for a new EU framework on sustainable resource management; the EU Critical Raw Materials Act mentions the need to “moderate demand”; and we gained popular public attention around Earth Overshoot Day.

A clear highlight was the European Parliament Beyond Growth Conference, of which we were an organising partner. We grew our partnerships for a sustainable economy, including with trade union confederations, feminist groups, anti-racism groups, anti-poverty groups, academic circles and environmental and social NGOs. We were repeatedly asked to organise follow-up meetings, which shows the leading role we are playing in the field.



© FoE Europe

## Growing support for resource reduction

### MINING THE DEPTHS OF INFLUENCE

How industry is forging the EU Critical Raw Material Act



© FoE Europe

We advocated for an ambitious EU Critical Raw Materials Act to include commitments on Indigenous People’s Right to Say No, however it did not make it to the final regulation. The same is said for mining in Natura2000 and other protected areas – mining will continue and maybe even in cases be fast-tracked. We do however see that many more civil society groups are starting to engage on the topics of resource use reduction and mining. The EU NGO Raw Materials Coalition now has more than 50 members, with lively debates and actions towards policy makers, for instance at the EU Raw Materials Week.

*...the logic of endless extraction and economic growth needs to be resisted, including among clean energy companies who portray themselves as champions of climate action.*

**Meadhbh Bolger**, resource justice campaigner in Deutsche Welle

Through an [open letter](#) signed by over 150 organisations and 250 experts, translated into 22 languages and published in 30+ news outlets, we contributed significantly to the visibility of and the mobilisation around the Beyond Growth conference in the European Parliament. The letter received a reply from Commissioners Timmermans and Dombrovskis. On the playful side, a fictional “newspaper from the future” helped conference participants, among whom many policy makers, envision what a post-growth Europe could look like.

“...we, the undersigned academics and civil society organisations, see the geopolitical crisis as an opportunity to disengage from the socially and ecologically harmful growth competition and instead embrace a wellbeing cooperation.

Excerpt from [the open letter](#)

## Beyond Growth taking over the European Parliament



## Campaign Highlights 2023

### Corporate power

We continued to fight corporate capture, and demand that the EU and the international community, through legislation, hold corporations accountable for the harm they cause around the world. A big win for us were the steps taken by the EU to exit the Energy Charter Treaty. We managed to keep the EU-Mercosur Free Trade Agreement controversial and far from being adopted.

We made good progress towards legislation to hold companies liable for their impact, with intense advocacy and campaigning for the EU’s Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Legislation. Without this campaign there would have been no public-facing activities around this law.



“The backlash against crucial EU Green Deal policies, led by corporate lobbies, gravely undermines the efforts made so far

**Paul de Clerck**, economic justice coordinator in the [Financial Times](#)

The Energy Charter Treaty is a climate-wrecking treaty from the past, invented to protect fossil fuel interests. We have been campaigning for years for the EU and member states to leave it, and 2023 brought significant results. Our campaigning contributed to the official announcements of several Member States that they were leaving the Treaty, and to the Commission proposal for a collective EU withdrawal.

## The Energy Charter Treaty



*The Commission’s decision to go for a coordinated withdrawal is the only logical way forward after eight countries already decided to leave the Energy Charter Treaty and the European Parliament also voted for such an exit”*

**Paul de Clerck**, economic justice coordinator in [Euractive](#)

## Stop EU-Mercosur



The EU-CELAC summit, bringing together heads of states in Europe and Latin America was a crucial campaign moment for us. Together with our European and Latin American allies, we organised a cross-party parliamentary event, a stunt in front of the European Parliament and a civil society conference.

Our campaigning has borne fruit: the negotiations on the EU-Mercosur trade deal are stuck and the ratification process delayed because of environmental concerns.

*The EU-Mercosur deal is rotten to its core. No new sustainability paper could prevent the disastrous impacts it would have on climate, people, and nature if it is ratified. EU leaders must prioritise our planet and lives over profits.”*

**Julie Zalcman**, trade campaigner

With the Justice is Everybody's Business [campaign](#) we worked intensively and publicly to push EU decision makers for a strong Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), to hold businesses accountable for the harm they cause through their supply chains. We fought back the efforts of corporate interests and regressive political influence intending to water down the directive. We mobilised the public through digital actions, and brought a giant [Lady Justice statue](#) around Europe.

## Lady Justice travels Europe



*We know companies are responsible for the vast majority of climate-wrecking emissions /.../ the proposed changes would make the new law weak and unenforceable.*

**Alban Grosdidier**, climate campaigner said to the [Associated Press](#)

## One step closer to kicking fossil fuels out of EU decision making



In 2023 we continued the work to end the undue fossil fuel company influence in EU decision-making within the framework of the Fossil Free Politics campaign. Highlights of the year include a [petition to kick big polluters out](#) of politics signed by over a 100,000 people, [a joint declaration by 100 civil society and trade unions](#) raising concerns about corporate capture of decision making.

For the first time ever, thanks to our advocacy work, MEPs from four political parties signed the call for a conflict-of-interest policy at EU-level. As a result, our demands for a European Parliament hearing on the fossil fuel industry's responsibility was approved.

We continued to build evidence and examples of corporate human rights and environmental abuses in global value chains. We published [a report on human rights due diligence failings](#) in relation to major gas projects in Northern Mozambique.

## Corporate accountability in Mozambique and beyond

*Europe is one of the major contributors to the current crises related to climate, biodiversity, energy and human rights violations around the world. Therefore, we consider it the responsibility of the European Union and other countries in the Global North to urgently start tackling these crises through lawmaking,"*

**Jill McArdle**, corporate accountability campaigner in Politico



# Empower Youth

With our “Empower Youth” project, we set out to make young people across Europe - especially those politically aware but under-represented or not yet active - feel connected and ready to engage in political processes while channelling their worries, concerns and ideas into meaningful action.



© Young FoEE

In spring 2023 the second training camp of the project took place in a Hungarian forest near Budapest. It brought together 40 young people from across Europe. Participants were trained as campaigners and communicators, equipped with the skills to empower others, including those from traditionally marginalised groups, like the LGBTIQ+ community, refugees and people of colour. The camp provided comprehensive capacity building, utilising popular education methods, and giving many opportunities for the participants to shape the programme. We enhanced participants' awareness, competencies, confidence, and resilience, enabling them to actively contribute to a more sustainable and democratic Europe in the years ahead.

# Solidarity Work 2023

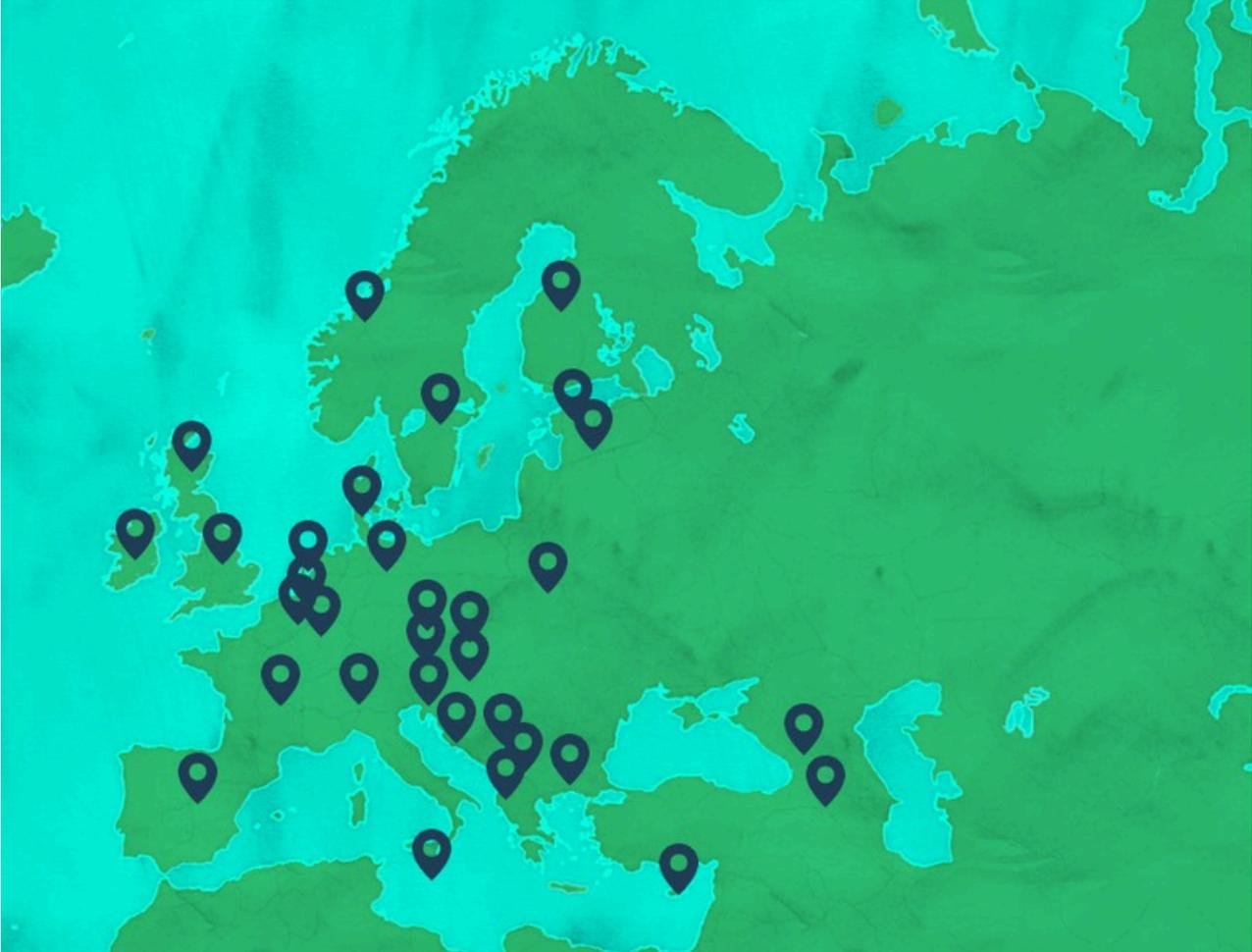


© Stratospheric Productions/Save Kresna Gorge

FoEE, our member groups, and allies proactively campaigned for support for local cases where social and environmental justice is at risk, with a focus on those where European companies, financial institutions or governments are involved. We worked to enable FoEE member groups to show and act in solidarity and publicised these cases on social and mainstream media to increase their international visibility and to mobilise international public support.

We published [a report on TotalEnergies' human rights failure in their Mozambique LNG Project](#); we supported [FoE Norway in their action against a toxic mining project](#); we amplified [FoE Bulgaria's struggle to stop a destructive motorway construction, and save the Kresna Gorge](#); we published [a solidarity and support statement for peasant struggles for food sovereignty](#); and we stood [in solidarity with environmental & social movements in France and condemning repression against them.](#)

# Member Highlights 2023



Category 1: Resisting false, providing real solutions



Category 3: Stronger together / Networking



Category 2: Dismantle corporate, build people power



Category 4: Movement building and mobilisation for system change



## Austria vs. new GMOs

### GLOBAL 2000 - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH AUSTRIA

The EU Commission aims to scrap proven regulations for genetically modified plants. We addressed the false sustainability claims of the GMO-industry and raised the big problem of patent claims on all "New Genomic Techniques" (NGT). We kickstarted an EU-wide petition for transparency and strict regulation that collected more than 420 000 signatures. Due to this pressure from citizens, Austria's conservative-green government took a clear position supporting strict regulation and labelling and has forged alliances with other governments.

1



© Christopher Glanzl / GLOBAL 2000

## PFAS in our blood



© vzw Climaxi

### CLIMAXI - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH BELGIUM (FLANDERS)

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are chemicals that do not break down in our bodies or the environment. Despite being extremely harmful, they are widely used by various industries. Together with the local action committees against pollution in Ronse, Kruisem, Ostend, Kortemark and Stabroek, we organised blood tests for PFAS. The analysis of 140 samples shows that 3 out of 4 people tested have PFAS levels in their blood that exceed the health standard. After demonstrations and motions in local councils, the Minister of Health announced that she will extend the PFAS blood tests to other pollution hotspots in 2025. Climaxi and the local committees are still pushing for legislation to make the polluter pay.

2



## Depicting post-growth societies



© Les Amis De La Terre Belgique

### LES AMIS DE LA TERRE BELGIQUE - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH BELGIUM (WALLONIA)

Our system, and the capitalist paradigm of 'growth', clearly shows its limits. It is time to explore other alternative paths and to propose economic, political, social, and family 'post-growth' possibilities to redefine the foundations of a sustainable and just society. In 2023, we organised more than 20 public screenings of the documentary film "Moins & Mieux. Vers une société post-croissance" that we co-produced. This documentary depicts a range of degrowth alternatives, all contributing to a collective project for a society based on simplicity, solidarity, sustainability, and well-being.

3



## Local community suing against lignite mine



© Center for the Environment

### CENTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT/FRIENDS OF THE EARTH BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

In 2023, the residents of the Local Community of Bistrica in Bosnia and Herzegovina filed a lawsuit against the concessionaire, the City of Prijedor, and the Republic of Srpska for activities related to the opening of a lignite mine on Bistrica territory. The lawsuit is unique because it was filed by a group of residents of a local community threatened by the harmful implementation of the disputed concession, against the concessionaire, the city and one of the entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is the first case of its kind in the country, and we contributed to it.

4



## Safer cycling in Sofia



© Petar Stoyanov

### ZA ZEMIATA - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH BULGARIA

Through our ongoing campaign efforts, we are fostering robust community awareness aimed at enhancing and securing safer bikeways throughout Sofia. Given the city's pronounced air pollution crisis, tied to traffic congestion, it is imperative that we strive for improved urban infrastructure to cultivate a cleaner, healthier urban landscape with reduced car dependency and safe pathways for pedestrians and cyclists. We have organised community events, produced impactful films depicting the consequences of inadequate cycling infrastructure, and gathered thousands of signatures on our petition. These efforts have prompted discussions with local authorities, signalling progress toward necessary reforms.

5



**People 1, incinerator 0**



© Zelena akcija

**ZELENA AKCIJA - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH CROATIA**

The campaign against the proposed incinerator at KBC Rebro, that we co-led together with the Citizens' Initiative "Stop the Rebro Incinerator", achieved success through rigorous advocacy and highlighting planning discrepancies. As a result, the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development suspended the environmental impact assessment, effectively halting the construction of the incinerator. This victory underscores citizen power in resisting harmful projects and emphasises the need for sustainable waste management solutions. Despite this victory, ongoing vigilance is crucial to advocate for lasting change in waste management practices.

6



**Sharing the energy**



© Blanka Adlerová / Hnutí DUHA

**HNUTÍ DUHA - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH CZECHIA**

Last year was a crucial year for community energy in the Czech Republic. There is a great interest in community energy, especially among municipalities. That is why we successfully pushed through a law that allows individuals, municipalities, local companies, and associations to establish energy communities and practically share energy. We also established our first energy cooperative in December. The cooperative has more than 200 members and is working on its first projects. Our goal for 2024 is to raise awareness, help create new communities, and share our knowledge. We will strive to bring its first kilowatts online and start sharing energy with its members.

7



**Preserving the right to opt out of GMOs**



© NOAH

**NOAH - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH DENMARK**

In 2023, the European Commission proposed to allow GMOs in our food and to exempt new GMOs from current requirements for risk assessment, traceability, and labelling. Together with a broad Danish coalition, we fought to preserve people's ability to opt out of GMOs. We launched a nationwide petition demanding that all GMOs continue to be risk assessed, labelled and traceable from farm to fork. GMOs are a false solution to the food crisis. NOAH advocates for agroecological, regenerative agriculture instead.

8



**The harmony of nature and clean energy**



**EESTI ROHELINE LIIKUMINE - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH ESTONIA**

To meet renewable energy goals, many countries are pushing to expedite permitting procedures and impact assessments for renewable energy projects, but this must be done carefully to also account for biodiversity preservation. Our campaign, "Renewable Energy and Biodiversity Can Coexist", addresses this crucial issue. Through initiatives like a [video](#) and a [webinar](#), we sought to minimize the negative impact of renewable projects on ecosystems. A roundtable discussion for representatives of municipalities, ministries and the European Commission further delved into challenges and solutions. By fostering dialogue and innovation, we aim to inspire the development of renewable energy parks that nurture biodiversity while advancing carbon neutrality. It is vital to safeguard our planet's natural diversity as we pursue cleaner energy solutions.

9



## #StopFast Fashion



© Benoit Derouet / Amis de la Terre France

### LES AMIS DE LA TERRE - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH FRANCE

10 years after the Rana Plaza tragedy, we launched a campaign against overproduction in the fashion sector, to tackle its dire human rights and climate consequences. Investigative work on Shein, the Chinese ultra-fast-fashion giant, revealed the scale of problem: on average, Shein adds more than 7,200 new clothing models to its online website every day. This figure, widely reported by the media, has made a lasting impression on public opinion and the need to tackle the fast-fashion model. During Black Friday we – as part of the #StopFastFashion coalition – called for a law against fast-fashion. The law has been tabled and is awaiting approval in the Senate.

10



## Youth Forum for Sustainability and Europe



© The Greens Movement of Georgia

### THE GREENS MOVEMENT OF GEORGIA - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH GEORGIA

At the beginning of 2023 we created a Youth Forum for Sustainable Development and European Integration and prepared a memorandum of cooperation with universities in Georgia. The forum aims to increase the awareness, involvement, and participation of young people in the decision-making process, and to present and reflect innovative visions on sustainable development in Georgia. The first stage of the forum was held in a discussion-panel format in 12 universities. At the plenary event 92 speakers prepared articles, which we subsequently published.

11



## 12 000 kids go meat free



© Magyar Természetvédők Szövetsége

### MAGYAR TERMÉSZETVÉDŐK SZÖVETSÉGE - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH HUNGARY

We organised a comprehensive campaign to implement weekly meat free days in public schools. We approached authorities, local governments, catering companies, and organised school activities. 12 000 children actively participated in the actions in 200+ schools. Six public catering companies changed their menu in 110 municipalities to provide more than 130 000 meat-free meals weekly. The issue of a weekly meat-free meal has become a topic of daily discussion in the catering sector.

12



## Stop fracked gas imports!



© Robbie Blake / FoE Ireland

### FRIENDS OF THE EARTH IRELAND

The fossil fuel industry is trying to develop the Shannon LNG terminal which risks fracked gas imports to Ireland. In September 2023 we had a big win when planning permission for the terminal was rejected on the grounds that the terminal would fall foul of a government policy that introduced a moratorium on LNG and fracked gas imports. This policy came about thanks to years of campaigning by FoE Ireland and grassroots activists. This fight is not over as the company has appealed the decision. But this rejection was a major step in preventing fossil fuel lock-in!

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**Engaging in local and national elections**



© Mouvement Ecologique

**MOUVEMENT ECOLOGIQUE - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH LUXEMBOURG**

Alongside the municipal elections, parliamentary elections took place in Luxembourg in 2023, marking a crucial juncture in the political landscape. In the run-up to these, we organised numerous participatory member forums. These fora were instrumental in formulating a comprehensive roadmap comprising 152 pages of detailed policy recommendations. Leading up to the elections, all political parties were invited to participate in two widely attended roundtable discussions focusing on agriculture, environmental conservation, nature preservation, and economic growth. These discussions served as platforms where parties grappled with the demands we put forth, adding depth to the electoral discourse.

14



**Turning an old bakery into a sustainability hub**



© Inigo Taylor

**FRIENDS OF THE EARTH MALTA**

We ran a successful crowdfunding campaign which raised over 30 000 euro to turn an old bakery on Comino, a small island, into a hub of sustainability. The hub will champion education about Comino's natural and cultural heritage. Earning the backing of more than 100 donors, companies, and organisations, we have started the basic restoration works including windows, doors, and basic security to prevent vandalism. Over the years, the island itself has been rapidly taken over by the interests of big business with a push to intensify activities at the blue lagoon. The bakery project, il-Forn ta' Kemmuna, seeks to raise awareness of the issues faced by the island.

15



**Shareholder activism to achieve the Paris agreement**



© Sanne Shiratski-van Hemert / Milieudefensie

**MILIEUDEFENSIE - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH NETHERLANDS**

Following our historic victory in the Climate Case against Shell in 2021, we aimed to confront other major Dutch polluters. After our publication of the Climate Crisis Index in 2022, which revealed that 29 polluters' climate plans fell short of Paris Agreement goals, in 2023 we started to mobilize hundreds of volunteers to buy shares in these companies. This enabled them to attend shareholder meetings, demanding a commitment to a 45% CO2 emissions reduction by 2030. While most companies responded negatively, increasing the risk of further climate damage and potential lawsuits, some, like construction company BAM, car producer Stellantis, and pension fund PFZW, agreed. This marks a giant step toward a significant reduction in global emissions.

16



**Save the fjord!**



© Wim Lassche

**NATURVERNFORBUNDET - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH NORWAY**

FoE Norway sued the Norwegian state over permits to dump mining waste in the pristine Førdefjorden. Since 2009, we've worked to save this fjord from being turned into a waste dump for the mining industry. Activists have done extensive political lobbying, campaigning and activism to stop the plans. The case was heard through 10 days in court. Sadly, Foe Norway lost the case. The permits were declared legal. FoE Norway appealed in February 2024. The case is also lifted to the European level through the ESA Court, who will provide a legal consideration to the Court of Appeal.

17



**Broad interest in the issue of factory farming**



**POLSKI KLUB EKOLOGICZNY - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH POLAND**

At the end of 2023 we organised a debate on the impact of industrial farms on the natural environment and human health. Almost 140 people took part. The debate included a broad range of experts, including from universities, NGOs, agricultural chambers, agricultural advisory centres, landscape parks, sanitary inspection, environmental protection directorates, local authorities, and sanitary-epidemiological stations. The big and broad participation shows how serious the issue of factory farms is in Poland. After the debate we shared our recommendations on factory farming with the Ministry of Agriculture.

18



**Fossil free politics**



© Phoebe Willison

**FRIENDS OF THE EARTH SCOTLAND**

Our research revealed almost 800 meetings between oil and gas companies and Scottish parliamentarians or Scottish Government Ministers in recent years. The research made front page news and exposed how these companies are using their power to delay climate action, push dodgy technology and cozy up to politicians. We are demanding that new rules are created, using the example of how tobacco lobbyists are excluded from public health decision making, to defend climate policy from oil company influence.

19



**Fighting climate change by collecting kitchen waste**



© SPZ

**PRIATELIA ZEME CEPA AND PRIATELIA ZEME SPZ - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH SLOVAKIA**

Maintaining the obligation to collect kitchen biowaste in households is our greatest success in 2023. It was a tough fight! We collaborated on the preparation of the relevant provisions in the legislation, and took part in demanding negotiations with opponents. Now 85 % of the population in Slovakia participates in one of the systems for the collection of kitchen biowaste: separate collection of kitchen biowaste from households (45%), joint collection of kitchen and garden biowaste (17%), or for home composting (36%).

20



**Energy community in a mining region**



© Focus

**FOCUS ASSOCIATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH SLOVENIA**

In a former Slovenian mining region, we facilitated a bottom-up process of establishing the Green Hrastnik energy cooperative and led its first energy community project installing a 300 kW photovoltaic power plant for collective self-consumption on the Hrastnik primary school. Powering 16 households, the school, town hall, swimming pool, shop, and two companies, it is Slovenia's first example of a cooperative self-consumption project. Embracing the ideal of "power to the people", we brought together the Municipality of Hrastnik and engaged citizens on a democratic basis. Our pioneering cooperative model, emphasising solidarity-based management of common resources and environmental sustainability, is poised to catalyse a wave of community energy projects in Slovenia.

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**Nos Plantamos for food sovereignty**

**AMIGOS DE LA TIERRA - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH SPAIN**

We have promoted the creation of "Nos Plantamos", a national alliance with farmers and land workers as protagonists, demanding care for the environment and rural areas, and offering consumers healthy, quality, and local food. The movement started with an event with hundreds of people belonging to more than 50 social, environmental, consumer and agricultural organisations. We gathered to join strengths and demand a fairer, more sustainable, and respectful food model for the rural world on the occasion of a meeting of EU Agriculture Ministers in Spain. The movement is growing and planning its next steps.



© Nos Plantamos

22



**Lady Justice in Stockholm**

**JORDENS VÄNNER - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH SWEDEN**

Our campaigns against corporate power brought our different branches closer to each other. In early 2023 our activist group on corporate power was reborn. In October we worked with FoEE to bring the 10-meter-high inflatable statue of "Lady Justice" to Stockholm to call attention to the injustice of the international system, and were joined by our older members. During the same period, our partners from UDAPT in Ecuador visited. Besides advocacy work they joined us for our annual member's meeting where members aged 20-80 gathered to discuss corporate power, system change and activism.



© Kandindé

23



**Biodiversity as a chain of domino blocks**

**PRO NATURA - FRIENDS OF THE EARTH SWITZERLAND**

As biodiversity loss accelerates in Switzerland and no measures have been taken by the government after the Convention on Biological Diversity COP in 2022, we gathered in front of the Swiss Parliament on the International Day for Biodiversity, to ring the alarm to the public a few months before the Swiss general elections. With giant dominos, featuring images of threatened species that were brought to fall in a chain reaction 5 minutes before 12, the symbolism was clear: biodiversity loss is an ongoing tragedy. Human beings - portrayed on the last domino piece - are ultimately in danger if nothing is done to stop the destruction.



© Pro Natura

24



Construction of solar panels for the energy community in Slovenia © Focus

# Our Funding 2023

## We saw an increase in income in 2023, in particular from philanthropic foundations.

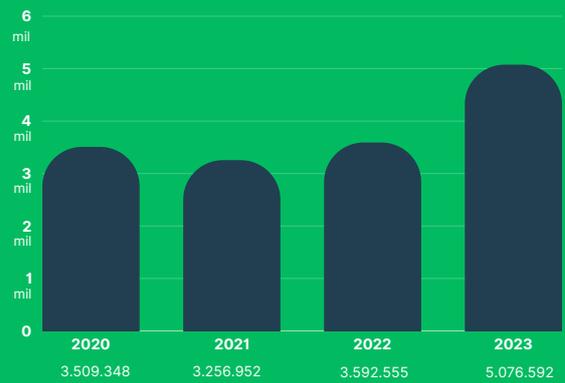
We continued to maintain a good balance between funding sources, with EU funding representing 17% of our income.

A total of 19 funders together with our member groups have contributed to our income, and do not have major dependencies on too few funding sources.

The vast majority of our funders have continued to support our work and we expect ongoing cooperation in 2024 as well.

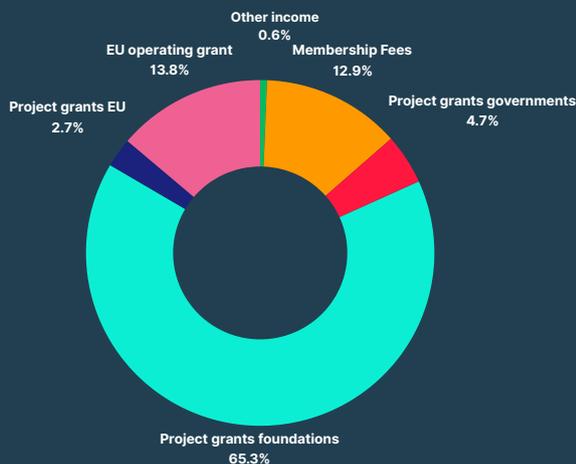
## Income trends

2020 - 2023  
(IN EUROS)



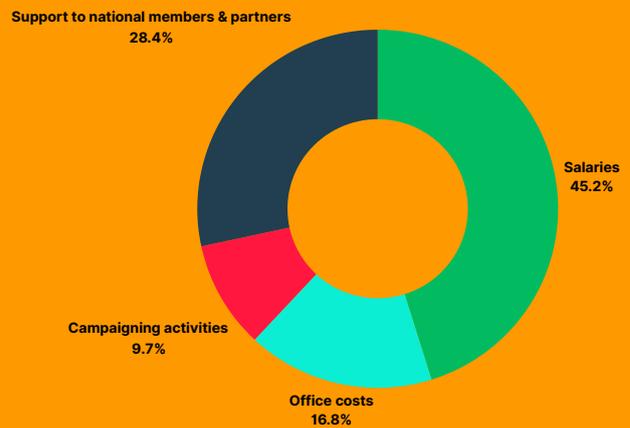
## Income by type 2023

Total income: 5.076.592 EUR



## Expenses by type 2023

Total expenses: 5.147.607 EUR



EU Transparency Register no. 9825553393-31

Full copies of Friends of the Earth Europe's accounts are available from the Belgian national bank at [www.nbb.be](http://www.nbb.be) from 1st July 2024. Quote company number 0443.252.089. Details of our funding can be found on our website: [www.friendsoftheearth.eu/our-funding](http://www.friendsoftheearth.eu/our-funding).

## Our Funding

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### Our Funders

Friends of the Earth Europe’s work would not be possible without the support of our donors. We would like to thank the following institutions and foundations for helping fund our work:

#### EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

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#### GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS

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German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

#### FOUNDATIONS

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- Adessium
- Children's Investment Fund Foundation
- European Climate Foundation
- Fondation Charles Léopold Mayer
- KR Foundation
- Marin Community Foundation
- Network of European Foundations
- New Venture Fund
- Oak Foundation
- Open Society Foundations
- Rockefeller Brothers Fund
- Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors,
- Wallace Global Fund
- Wellspring Foundation



A participant at Friends of the Earth France’s climate camp. © Revol

## Thank you!

Thank you also to our national member groups and to Friends of the Earth International.

# Key Figures 2023

10

years of the  
Community Power  
Coalition

300

organisations  
signed letter to VP  
Timmermans to  
keep GMOs  
regulated

500

participants in  
online Right to  
Energy Forum

10

metres tall  
inflatable Lady  
Justice

104 358

signatories on the  
petition to kick the  
fossil fuel industry  
out of politics

**MOBILISE! RESIST! TRANSFORM!**

**Albania, Tirana** EDEN | Friends of the Earth Albania. **Armenia, Yerevan** Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment | Friends of the Earth Armenia. **Austria, Vienna** GLOBAL 2000 | GLOBAL 2000. **Belgium – Wallonie, Namur** Les Amis de la Terre | Friends of the Earth Wallonia & Brussels. **Belgium – Flanders, Gent** Friends of the Earth Vlaanderen & Brussel | Friends of the Earth Flanders & Brussels. **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Banja Luka** Centar za životnu sredinu | Friends of the Earth Bosnia and Herzegovina. **Bulgaria, Sofia** Za Zemiata | Friends of the Earth Bulgaria. **Croatia, Zagreb** Zelena Akcija | Friends of the Earth Croatia. **Cyprus, Limassol** Friends of the Earth | Friends of the Earth Cyprus. **Czech Republic, Brno** Hnutí Duha | Rainbow Movement. **Denmark, Copenhagen** NOAH | NOAH Friends of the Earth Denmark. **England/Wales/Northern Ireland, London** Friends of the Earth | Friends of the Earth. **Estonia, Tartu** Eesti Roheline Liikumine | Estonian Green Movement. **Finland, Turku** Maan Ystävät Ry | Friends of the Earth Finland. **France, Montreuil** Les Amis de la Terre | Friends of the Earth France. **Georgia, Tbilisi** Sakhartvelos Mtsvaneta Modzraoba | Greens Movement of Georgia. **Germany, Berlin** Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland | Friends of the Earth Germany. **Hungary, Budapest** Magyar Természetvédők Szövetsége | National Society of Conservationists. **Ireland, Dublin** Friends of the Earth | Friends of the Earth Ireland. **Latvia, Riga** Zemes Draugi | Friends of the Earth Latvia. **Luxembourg, Luxembourg** Mouvement Ecologique | Ecological Movement. **Macedonia, Skopje** Dvizhenje na Ekologistite na Makedonija | Ecologist's Movement of Macedonia. **Malta, Valletta** Moviment għall-Ambjent | Friends of the Earth Malta. **The Netherlands, Amsterdam** Vereniging Milieudéfensie | Friends of the Earth Netherlands. **Norway, Oslo** Norges Naturvernforbund | Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature. **Poland, Krakow** Polski Klub Ekologiczny | Polish Ecological Club. **Russia, St. Petersburg** Russian Social-Ecological Union | Friends of the Earth Russia. **Scotland, Edinburgh** Friends of the Earth Scotland | Friends of the Earth Scotland. **Slovakia, Banská Bystrica** Priatel'ia Zeme – Slovensko | Friends of the Earth Slovakia. **Slovenia, Ljubljana** Focus | Friends of the Earth Slovenia. **Spain, Madrid** Amigos de la Tierra | Friends of the Earth Spain. **Sweden, Gothenburg** Jordens Vänner | Friends of the Earth Sweden. **Switzerland, Basel** Pro Natura | Friends of the Earth Switzerland.

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