

## **Declaration in Solidarity with Russian Environmental NGO Ecodefense!**

Ecodefense is one of the oldest environmental groups in Russia, founded in 1989 in Kaliningrad. It works in various regions of Russia including Moscow, Kaliningrad and Siberia (Kuzbass) and has already successfully stopped nuclear power plants and coal mines.

In 2014 the Russian government officially labeled Ecodefense as a “foreign agent”, because the organisation convinced a number of investors from Europe not to invest in a nuclear plant near Kaliningrad, which stopped the plant’s construction in mid-2013.

The Russian Ministry of Justice initiated 28 legal (administrative) cases against Ecodefense for non-compliance with the law, leading to fines totaling Euro 30,000, which the organization did not pay until now. Ecodefense turned to the European Court on Human Rights (ECHR) in the collective case “Ecodefense and Others vs Russia” together with 61 Russian civil society groups that were affected by the law on foreign agents.

In May 2019, the situation worsened even further: Russian authorities launched 5 criminal cases against Ecodefense. These charges could mean a jail-sentence of up to two years for the organisation’s director, Alexandra Koroleva.

Though Ecodefense is not the first NGO to refuse to pay its fines, it is the first case so far in which the authorities have launched a criminal case against a civil society organization. This is a dangerous precedent, which could lead to further crackdowns on the civil society of Russia!

**Declaring Ecodefense a foreign agent as well as the criminal charges against the organization are clearly driven by political motives.**

In solidarity with Ecodefense...

...we demand all charges against Alexandra Koroleva and her organization to be dropped immediately.

...we will actively spread information on the political repression of Ecodefense, to make sure their case stays in the public realm.

...we are collecting donations for Ecodefense to pay their – wrongfully imposed - fines, as this could help to ease their current situation.

**Signed by:**

350.org  
AAPK – Anti-Atom Plenum Köln, Germany  
AKU Schüttdorf, Germany  
AntiAtomBonn, Germany  
AntiAtom-Euskirchen, Germany  
Arbeitsgruppe Schweiz-Kolumbien, Schweiz  
Banktrack  
BBU - Bundesverband Bürgerinitiativen Umweltschutz, Germany  
BI STOPPT TEMELIN, Germany  
Bürgerinitiative Umweltschutz Lüchow-Dannenberg, Germany  
Citizens Awareness Network, USA  
ClientEarth  
Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe  
Coal Action Network, UK  
Colombia Solidarity Campaign, UK  
Colombia Solidarity Denmark  
Dachverband der Kritischen Aktionärinnen und Aktionäre, Germany  
Deutsche Umwelthilfe e.V., Germany  
Earthlife Africa Jhb, South Africa  
Ecoclub, Ukraine  
Europe Beyond Coal  
FERN, Belgium/UK  
Friends of the Earth USA  
Fundacja "Rozwój TAK - Odkrywki NIE", Poland  
Global Energy Monitor, USA  
Greenpeace  
groundWork, Friends of the Earth South Africa  
IIDMA – instituto internacional de derecho y medio ambiente, Spain  
Klima-Allianz Deutschland, Germany  
Latvian Environmental Protection Club  
Les Amis de la Terre, France  
London Mining Network, UK  
MISEREOR, Germany  
Naturfreunde Berlin  
Naturfreunde Deutschlands  
Nuclear Information and Resource Service, USA  
Ökumenisches Netz Rhein-Mosel-Saar, Germany  
Oil Change International  
PowerShift e.V., Germany  
Re:Common, Italy  
Research Group CoalExit, TU Berlin, Germany  
Umweltinstitut München, Germany  
urgewald e.V., Germany  
Vermont Yankee Decommissioning Alliance, USA  
WWF Germany