

Media release

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# NGOs challenge European Commission's undemocratic 'Omnibus' process

A coalition of eight NGOs today lodged a formal complaint with the European Ombudsman, condemning the undemocratic, untransparent and rushed way in which the European Commission has developed the Omnibus proposal.

The Omnibus proposal seeks to significantly water down key EU sustainability laws that were recently adopted, including the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) and the EU Taxonomy Regulation.

NGOs deplore that the process leading to this proposal [was deeply flawed](#), enabling a small group of industry interests to take control and push for the deregulation of key sustainability laws.

**ClientEarth, Notre Affaire À Tous, Clean Clothes Campaign, European Coalition for Corporate Justice, Global Witness, T&E, Anti-Slavery International, and Friends of the Earth Europe** said:

*"We are contesting the Commission's rushed dismantling of three key pillars of the Green Deal – including laws meant to improve the environmental and human impacts of global trade – a process that completely disregards people and nature's rights.*

*"The Omnibus proposal was made without any public consultation, sidelining civil society, with a lack of evidence or environmental and social impact assessments, and with a primary focus on narrow industry interests. This reckless move not only weakens sustainability rules but also damages public trust in the EU's democratic foundations."*

More specifically, the NGOs accuse the Commission of:

- Failing to properly gather evidence and assess the environmental and social impacts of amending corporate laws designed to protect citizens in the EU and beyond;

- Sidestepping broad consultations to favour closed-door meetings dominated by oil and gas industry interests (the content of which were revealed only through [press leaks](#))
- Failing to assess whether its proposal aligns with the EU's climate-neutrality target – in breach of its obligations under the European Climate Law;

Besides being at odds with the EU's core democratic values and environmental goals, NGOs warn that the 'Omnibus' could also undermine EU's economic stability and the competitiveness objectives it is supposed to help.

The coalition added: *"This so-called simplification does nothing to enhance competitiveness; the European Commission is ignoring both evidence and science."*

*"Strong sustainability laws like the CSDDD and CSRD are key to the EU's competitive advantage in a global market where consumers and investors increasingly demand responsible corporate action. We have seen time and time again that vague corporate promises aren't driving the change we need. Weakening environmental and human rights requirements is a step in the wrong direction."*

NGOs are calling on the European Parliament and Council to reject the Omnibus proposal.

**ENDS**

## **Notes to editors:**

- Over the past months, NGOs, Trade Unions and [businesses](#) have actively opposed the European Commission's "Omnibus" proposal. Several companies have urged the commission to keep the current rules in place. The companies described investment and competitiveness as "founded on policy certainty and legal predictability."

In February 2025, ClientEarth lawyers [criticised the proposal](#) for significantly weakening corporate responsibility by limiting due diligence to direct business partners and diluting climate transition plan obligations. The proposal equally drew criticism for [weakening corporate action addressing modern slavery](#) in global supply chains. In response to the Omnibus proposal, more than 362 civil society organisations sent a [joint statement](#) urging the European Parliament and Council to reject the proposed amendments, emphasizing that they erode corporate accountability commitments and diminish human rights and environmental protections.

Despite these concerns, the Commission proceeded with the proposal, which is now under consideration by the European Parliament and the Council. In March the Council agreed on the proposal to delay the implementation of the CSDDD, and on April 3, 2025, the European Parliament followed suit, granting lawmakers additional time to renegotiate the instrument.

- Last year, ClientEarth also filed two other complaints against the EU Commission's undemocratic processes to the EU Ombudsman: [Commission's "anti-democratic" CAP revision escalated to EU Ombudsman](#) and [Ombudsman opens inquiry after EU trashes wolf protections](#).

## About ClientEarth

ClientEarth is a non-profit organisation that uses the law to create systemic change that protects the Earth for – and with – its inhabitants. We are tackling climate change, protecting nature and stopping pollution, with partners and citizens around the globe. We hold industry and governments to account, and defend everyone's right to a healthy world. From our offices in Europe, Asia and the USA we shape, implement and enforce the law, to build a future for our planet in which people and nature can thrive together.

## About Global Witness

Global Witness is an investigative, campaigning organisation. We expose how the industries fuelling the climate crisis profit from destruction, and stand with the people fighting back to defend their communities and their rights. Using cutting-edge investigative methods, we shine a light on the financial and political systems that enable corporate abuses of power that harm people and planet. We work with the people who are directly impacted to ensure they are protected from threats when speaking out, and included in climate decision-making as the world transitions to clean energy.

## About Anti-Slavery International

Anti-Slavery International is one of the world's oldest human rights organisations. With our roots in an organisation founded in 1839, we have a long track record of challenging slavery in all its forms. Today, we exist to ensure all people, everywhere, are free from slavery. We challenge modern forms of slavery wherever they exist by tackling the root causes of slavery and creating lasting freedom for all.

We work in partnership with survivors, businesses and grassroots organisations to deliver projects that challenge the root causes of modern slavery. We do this by pushing for legal protections for people, making sure people know their rights and making the problem of, and solutions to, modern slavery much better understood by everyone.

## About ECCJ

The [European Coalition for Corporate Justice \(ECCJ\)](#) is the largest civil society network devoted to corporate accountability, gathering more than 480 NGOs, trade unions and academic institutions throughout Europe to develop a common vision and approach to the issue. ECCJ currently has 20 members including national coalitions, national chapters from Amnesty International and Oxfam, and international organisations like Friends of the Earth Europe and FIDH. We draw on their expertise and experience and provide a united voice.

## About Clean Clothes Campaign

Clean Clothes Campaign is the garment's industry oldest and largest alliance of labour unions and non-governmental organisations, counting more than 230 members in over 45 countries.

Through our Urgent Appeal system we offer direct solidarity support to workers fighting against specific worker rights violations. We also collaborate with workers to co-develop global campaigns on achieving systemic goals like the payment of living wages and the eradication of gender based violence in the workplace. To ensure the fundamental rights of workers are respected we educate and mobilise consumers and we lobby companies and governments at a regional and national scale. All members, partners and associates of CCC are dedicated to empowering workers to improve the working conditions of the global garment and sportswear industries.

## About T&E

T&E (Transport & Environment) is a federation of European NGOs that advocates for the decarbonisation of the transport and energy sectors. Our vision is a zero-emission mobility system that is affordable, circular and has minimal impacts on our health, climate and environment. To achieve this, for over 30 years we have been working to

shape key EU environmental laws.

## **About Friends of the Earth Europe**

Friends of the Earth Europe is the largest grassroots environmental network in Europe, uniting more than 30 national organisations with thousands of local groups. We are the European arm of Friends of the Earth International. We represent the network at the heart of the European Union and campaign for sustainable solutions to benefit the planet, people and our future.

## **About Notre Affaire à Tous**

Launched in 2015, Notre Affaire à Tous is an association that uses the law as a strategic lever in the fight against the triple environmental crises - climate, biodiversity, pollution. It defends a vision of law in favour of social justice and the primary communities concerned. Through a network of mobilised citizens, Notre Affaire à Tous works to push back the frontiers of the law in favour of a democratic system that protects life and fundamental rights.