



At the second annual **African Environmental Defenders Regional Convening**, hosted by Natural Justice in 2024, Environmental Defenders identified four key priority issues that should be considered at the national, regional and international level.

PREAMBLE

**We are a movement of African Environmental Defenders.
We are individuals, communities, organisations and coalitions.
We hold no special religion, faith or belief.
We own, use and protect the land.
We are the voice for our communities.
We are not anti-development.
We hold our governments accountable for their commitments.
We promote sustainability.
We believe that we have a responsibility to preserve our common heritage.
We are the protectors of mother earth.**

WE DEMAND THE FOLLOWING

THAT our governments recognize and respect the role and human rights of environmental defenders.

We demand the adoption of a legally binding regional treaty that promotes and recognizes the role of African environmental and land defenders and calls on state parties to develop measures to protect environmental defenders, promote their public participation and access to justice in environmental matters.

THAT our governments respect their climate change and biodiversity commitments.

We demand an end to false solutions and a positive shift towards rights-based and gender-transformative climate change solutions.

We demand governments reduce fossil fuel production by incentivizing the adoption of renewable energy.

THAT COP mechanisms and other national, regional and global multilateral processes are inclusive, gender-responsive and age-sensitive.

We demand meaningful inclusion and participation for youth and women environmental defenders and strengthened support for women involved in conservation and agroforestry, to set their own targets and commitments in environmental matters.

THAT our governments hold perpetrators of attacks accountable.

We demand our governments investigate, prosecute and punish human rights abuses, and ensure reparations are provided for the victims of the crimes.

We demand companies stop financing in-country state machinery to perpetrate abuses, and use strategic lawsuits to silence or intimidate environmental defenders, and implement policies and practices that respect public participation and the right to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent.

We demand clear and comprehensive redress mechanism options to hold government and businesses to account for gross human rights violations.

THAT governments must promote rights-based approaches to conservation and climate change.

We demand an end to militarized conservation and a shift towards community-led conservation.

We demand that indigenous peoples and local communities lead and participate in the management of natural resources, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the protection of biodiversity within their territories.