



Global Atlas of Environmental Justice re-launches website tracking ecological conflicts globally

New platform integrates geo-spatial data to present conflicts in context and expands its coverage

[BRUSSELS, 2 March 2015, under embargo until 3 March, 00:01 AM CET]

The EJOLT project launches today a new phase of the [Global Atlas of Environmental Justice](#), an interactive map that catalogues thousands of localized stories of resistance against damaging projects: from mines to toxic waste sites to oil refining operations to areas of deforestation. The Atlas is an initiative of the Environmental Justice Organizations, Liabilities and Trade (EJOLT) project. This collaborative research project dedicated to supporting environmental justice organizations is supported by the European Union and coordinated by Prof. Joan Martinez Alier at the Autonomous University of Barcelona (ICTA-UAB). The new platform is launched at the project closing meeting, an [international conference on environmental justice](#) organized today by the European Environmental Bureau in Brussels.

Since its first launch on March 19, 2014, the atlas has received wide acclaim from media, academics and activists. Over a quarter million users opened almost a million pages. According to EJAtlas coordinator and editor Dr. Leah Temper, “the new website will make the connections between economic activities, companies and environmental impacts even clearer. This will greatly enhance its use by environmental justice organizations and front-line communities”.

According to Prof. Paul Mohai (Michigan University), “Those who have been observing, analyzing, and writing about environmental injustice have consistently observed the importance of access to information and resources for communities experiencing environmental injustice. The EJAtlas provides a powerful visual representation of the extent of environmental conflicts worldwide and underscores the importance and urgency of addressing these conflicts.”

Mohammed Rafi Arefin (University of Wisconsin) writes about the EJAtlas, “Mainstream media make headlines of disaster and disempowerment, with impacted communities painted as helpless victims rather than as agents of change. The EJ Atlas counters this narrative with one of hope for justice and environmental sustainability.”

Modifications and improvements to the website include:

- Coverage of almost 1400 cases of environmental conflicts in all continents contributed by over 130 collaborators.
- Improved coverage from countries where information is hard to get, like [China](#), [Kazakhstan](#) and [Western Sahara](#). Our reporting on these cases give essential backing and cover to harassed activists in these countries.
- A new dynamic interface with a feed featuring newly added, updated and recently commented cases. The new layout increases engagement, makes it easier to share on social media and to highlight hot cases in the news.
- Improved Search & Filter: The search and filter functionality has been completely retooled. In addition to filters across over 50 categories of activity, groups mobilizing, tactics employed (boycotts, land occupation, lawsuits, media activism and more), and by the success of the resistance efforts, a new logical box design allows and/or and not searches as well as filters by company and domestic country of the company and by International Institution.
- Featured maps that combine new geospatial data layers on issues such as water scarcity, forest cover, mining and oil concessions allowing greater insight into the context and the underlying social and environmental drivers of the conflicts. The 6 new featured maps include these 3:

[Fracking Frenzy](#): As conventional oil and gas resources deplete, the fossil fuel industry is increasingly turning to unconventional energy sources such as shale oil & gas and coal-bed methane. This map draws from the report Fracking Frenzy by Friends of the Earth and features data on reserves, water risk to show how concerns over water are mobilizing “Fracktivist” movements in the South and worldwide.

[Mining in Latin America](#): Latin America has experienced a mining boom in the last four decades. This map displays how

the expansion of the metal mining frontier overlaps with environmental (biodiversity hotspots, forests) and socially sensitive areas (water resources, peasant and indigenous lands) and the related conflicts, forty percent of which have seen violent repression or criminalization of activists. The map integrates data from the Global Witness report “Deadly Environment” highlighting how environmentalists are being targeted for their defence of the environment.

Climate Debt: “By over-consuming the available capacity of the Earth’s atmosphere and climate system to absorb greenhouse gases the developed countries have run up a climate debt to developing countries and mother Earth. This map highlights this spatial mal-distribution of climate change sources and impacts, displaying per capita CO2 emissions and a climate change vulnerability index as well as the total carbon debt/claim of 154 countries in 2011 in million tons of CO2 as calculated by Rikard Warlenius, Human Ecology, Lund University.

New featured country maps include Madagascar and Colombia. While EJAtlas’ coverage of conflicts continues to expand, many regions, like Central Asia, the Middle East and China, are not duly represented yet. The EJAtlas editors invite organizations and academics with expertise on specific issues to contribute to the further development of this constantly expanding database. They also invite collaboration in the creation of featured maps on specific issues of concern.

According to Temper, “this new phase of the Environmental Justice Atlas aims to deepen the discussion on social conflict related to environmental impacts and provide a forum for the claims for justice and alternatives voiced by the most impacted and marginalized communities.” Atlas editor Daniela del Bene adds: “These new features help see these conflicts as embedded in an extractive global economy rather than as isolated complaints.”

The atlas will be presented at an event in Brussels today where according to Prof. Martinez-Alier, “the project calls on European Union policymakers and parliamentarians to integrate environmental justice concerns into their policy agenda and move towards reducing the current atmosphere of impunity for environmental crimes.”

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Notes to the Editor:

- Hyperlinks: the [Atlas](#), EJOLT [website](#), [facebook](#), [twitter](#), [3 March conference](#)
- Visuals are available on request. Here is the pdf

More Praise for the EJAtlas

“As it continues to expand, the Atlas may prove to be a powerful tool for communities facing environmental injustices.” - [Center for Health, Environment and Justice](#)

The sheer amount of mapped conflicts is impressive, but what stands out about this tool is the extensive filter and search functionality. - [Mohammed Rafi Arefin](#) (Nelson Centre, University of Wisconsin – Madison)

“The EJAtlas is a groundbreaking initiative to connect academic research to environmental activists worldwide. The EJAtlas establishes a radically new platform for both engaged research and activist analysis, and can be expected to have transformative effects on both research and activism.” - Thomas Sikor, Global Environmental Justice Group, University of East Anglia

“EJAtlas is a visually powerful, simple to use site that not only provides a global view of these issues, with the capacity to go down to specific on-ground situations, but also strengthens movements by showing them that there are similar struggles elsewhere, and enabling them to network more effectively.” - Ashish Kothari, Author of “**Churning the Earth**: The Making of a Global India” and Director of Kalpavriksh.