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## **EUROPE'S LAST REAL PRIMEVAL FOREST THREATENED ACUTE**

In the eastern Polish Białowieża primeval forest, the Polish government, under blatant reasoning, massively destroys the biosphere and species by permitting the deforestation of ancient trees. It violates European law, infringes the injunction of the European Court of Justice, and inflicts irreparable harm to UNESCO World Heritage sites. German Federal Association for Sustainability spares an emergency chute, intends to set up a Task Force and calls for the use of UN blue helmets in this war against unspoilt nature.

The German Federal Association for Sustainability (GFAS, [www.bvng.org/en](http://www.bvng.org/en)) is highly alerted about the violations of the Polish government against democracy and the rule of law. In addition to the attempt to abolish the division of powers - one of the basic principles of democracy - through a judicial "reform", it now also irrevocably destroys a unique natural space that is subject to the special protection afforded by the UNESCO World Natural Heritage Program.

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) has disposed the suspension of deforestation in a very rare express ruling on July 20, 2017, because the judges are apparently afraid of irreparable damage until the decision is made in the main proceedings. The Polish government in a so far unique process is not willing to follow the rule. According to the recent reporting by a GFAS activist about the situation on site, private paramilitary security services protect the deforestation. Police do not intervene to protect neither the primeval forest nor the people who have so far tried to save the forest.

On the contrary, the protesters are attacked with intimidating, massive, high claims for damages by the police and the prosecutor's office. A compensation, which appears to be levied on the reason of covering the "economic damage".

For GFAS, the question is how the UNESCO protection and the case-law of the European Court of Justice can be enforced if the government of an EU member state so clearly violates regulations and leads a war against unspoiled nature, the last of its kind in Europe. If the judiciary and the executive are predominantly similar and do not step in for this, the German Federal Association for Sustainability believes that this can only be done by supra-national organizations and/or European civil society.

GFAS is therefore taking the initiative to set up an emergency chute. It calls UNESCO to examine the mission of UN blue helmets. They are intended to ensure that protection and jurisdiction remain effective. Nature conservation and strong institutions\* are peace issues. GFAS also calls for the formation of a civil society TaskForce for Nature, the "green helmets", which quickly and directly supports the primeval forest rescuers on location.

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\* Sustainable Development Goal of the UN (SDG) 16