

Individuals, groups, and non-governmental organisations across the EU may often become aware of projects planned for their area that are, or may be, **harmful to ecosystems, habitats or species**. They play a key role in **identifying, monitoring** and, where necessary, **submitting complaints to demand improvements or prevent these projects from going ahead**.

However, determining whether a project is harmful, gathering sufficient evidence, and determining the best course of action can be challenging due to a lack of capacity, information, and resources.

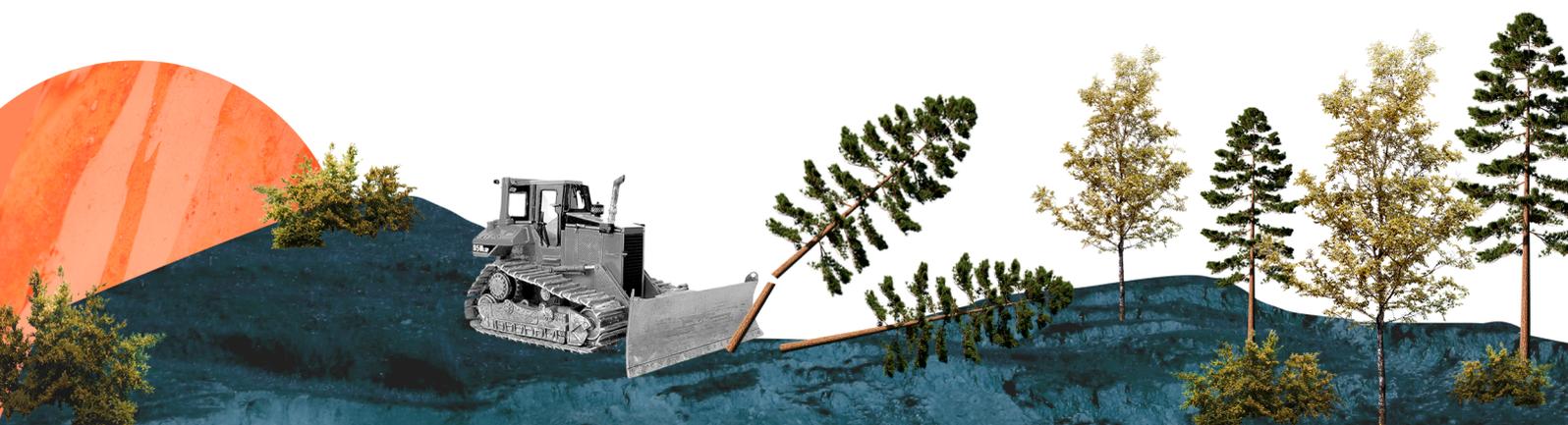
▶ **Our project documenting tool addresses these challenges by offering a practical, step-by-step approach to monitoring problematic projects. It equips individuals, groups and organisations with the tools to quickly evaluate the potential impacts of a project.**

Once a clear picture of the current situation and potential harm is established, **you'll be in a better position to stop the project and prevent it from harming biodiversity**.

We also recommend **getting in touch with more experienced campaigners** from local, national or international organisations for guidance on each specific case. This can help **focus limited resources on actions with the greatest impact**.

After reading this guide, please proceed to the following documents:

1. Our project documenting tool: [*questionnaire*](#)
2. [*Our case-based example*](#) showing how the tool can be applied to harmful projects.



• What the tool is •

This tool is based on the **practical experiences of campaigners** who have monitored and successfully campaigned against harmful projects. The steps outlined **will help you take action to identify potential risks and impacts.**

The tool provides step-by-step guidance to help you:

- ▶ **gather essential information about planned projects such as locations, methods, and project phases;**
- ▶ **organise that information in a clear and compelling format as a precondition for further action;**
- ▶ **get a better understanding of a project's scope and potential impacts to identify future actions.**

Once you've completed the questionnaire, **you'll be able to present a clear and straightforward case to the authorities**, demonstrating why a project is, or could be, harmful.

While the tool is **primarily designed for documenting EU-funded projects**, it can also be applied to **projects financed through other sources** like national funds.

• What the tool is not •

The tool is designed to identify and rectify potential cases of environmentally harmful funding, **but it is not:**

- ▶ **an official complaint mechanism;**
- ▶ **a document that provides legal advice; or**
- ▶ **a comprehensive guide on EU funding or on all potential mechanisms to suspend or stop projects.**



• Overview of steps •

Our project documenting tool proposes the following steps you can take to tackle harmful projects:

1. Identify the project you consider potentially harmful.

2. Read this guide, **download** the blank project documenting tool, and **review** the example.

3. Check whether **other individuals, groups or organisations share similar concerns**. The more of you there are the better. For example, you could **connect with local, regional or national environmental groups** online.



4. If you can't find information on the project, contact your local, regional or national authority to request the details you need. **Ask the following questions:**

- ▶ **Who is the project developer?**
- ▶ **What does the project involve?**
- ▶ **Where is it located?**
- ▶ **How will it be financed?**
- ▶ **What's the status of the permitting process?**
- ▶ **Has an environmental impact assessment or an appropriate assessment under the Habitats Directive been carried out or are there plans to do so?**
- ▶ **If decisions regarding the project have already been issued, where can they be found online?**



5. **Complete the project documenting tool**, giving as many details as possible.

6. **Contact environmental organisations** in your area to raise concerns based on the completed questionnaire and **ask for their guidance on future steps.**

Please reach out to info@euronatur.org, attaching all relevant documents using the subject email 'Harmful project documentation'.

• How to use the questionnaire •

The more information you have, the more effective this tool will be. However, it's still useful even if you haven't completed all the sections, helping you gather information on:

1. **project activity type;**
2. **timelines;**
3. **locations;**
4. **financing;**
5. **potentially harmful impacts; and**
6. **possible future actions.**

DOWNLOAD OUR PROJECT DOCUMENTING TOOL

Download our harmful project case study

Download our publication – EU funds: Protecting or damaging nature? How to avoid harmful projects

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bankwatch.org/documenting-harmful-projects