

KILLINGS BY SUSPECTED PERPETRATOR 2017

Unknown	58
Criminal gangs	32
Armed forces	30
Police	23
Paramilitary forces	13
Poachers	12
Armed militia	10
Others	9
Landowners	9
Private security guards	8
Hitmen	5
Governmental entities	2
Guerrilla armies	1
Local government officials	1

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These defenders are part of a global movement to protect the planet. They are on the frontline of fighting climate change, preserving ecosystems and safeguarding human rights. They stand up for causes that benefit us all: sustainability, biodiversity and justice.

IRRESPONSIBLE BUSINESS DRIVING ATTACKS

The failure of many governments and businesses to act responsibly, ethically and even legally was a major driving force behind a litany of crimes against activists last year.

Companies have a responsibility to their customers, who should have confidence that the products they buy are not fuelling human rights abuses, cultural destruction or environmental devastation. And consumers have a responsibility to demand that these companies live up to their responsibilities.

When rich tropical forest is levelled for monoculture crops, delicate ecosystems that could capture carbon emissions are lost forever. When open land is turned over for mining, soil and freshwater are poisoned, jeopardising the health and the future of nearby communities.

It is irresponsible business and investors – hell bent on meeting consumer demand and maximising profit – who, together with corrupt or negligent governments, make this all possible.

OUR CALL TO YOU

We urge the powerful institutions and organisations that threaten the interests of defenders to use their power to be a force for good. Governments and business have the financial, legislative and executive muscle, as well as the legal duty – to make a profound difference, rather than continuing to be part of the problem.

[*Read our recommendations for government and business \(/en/campaigns/environmental-activists/what-businesses-governments-can-do-defenders/\)*](#)

[*Find out how you can stand with defenders \(https://act.globalwitness.org/page/27109/subscribe/1\)*](#)

Despite the odds they face, the global community of land and environmental defenders is not going to go away – it's only getting stronger. We will campaign alongside them, taking their fight to the corridors of power and the boardrooms of corporations. We will make sure their voices are heard. And we will be watching to help ensure that they, their land, and the environment we all depend on are properly protected.

FIND OUT MORE

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