

3.3. Environmental activists

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Since the beginning of the full-scale war in Ukraine in February 2022, environmental activists remaining in Russia have become increasingly cut off from international networks and support structures.364 As of 25 April 2025, 38 entities, 4 individuals, and 2 media outlets engaged in environmental activities were designated as 'foreign agents', with 34 of them being forced to close.365 As noted by the UN Special Rapporteur, Mariana Katzarova, at least two entities and two individuals were added to the list of 'foreign agents' between 2024 and 2025.366

As reported by the Russian Socio-Ecological Union (RSEU),367 in 2024, authorities initiated 5 criminal cases and at least 30 administrative cases against environmental activists. The source also noted that 72 environmental activists, 15 initiative groups, and 5 environmental organisations 'faced pressure' during 2024. These cases were recorded in 27 regions, with Moscow seeing the highest number (20), followed by Bashkortostan (16), Moscow region (10), Krasnodar region (8), Sverdlovsk region (8), and Arkhangelsk region (5 cases). Moreover, RSEU recorded 13 attacks on environmental activists, resulting in various types of injuries, and 5 cases of property damage.368 The attacks on environmental activists often involved 'private security or unidentified assailants.'369

In 2024, at least five new criminal cases were initiated against environmental activists;370 in three of them, activists from Bashkortostan were charged with organising and participating in mass unrest and using non-lethal violence against an official.371

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  Plantan, E., Environmental Activism in Russia since the 2022 Full-Scale Invasion of Ukraine, Russian Analytical Digest, No. 324, 28 February 2025, url, p. 8

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  EKG, Список НКО и физлиц, внесённых в реестр иностранных агентов в связи с природоохранной деятельностью [List of NGOs and individuals included in the register of foreign agents in connection with environmental activities], 25 April 2025, url

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  UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Russian Federation, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation, Mariana

Katzarova,15 September 2025, url, para. 57

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  The Socio-Ecological Union, established in 1992, is a St. Petersburg-based NGO, which as of May 2021 had 242 member organisations, see, Oshchepkov, M., Best Climate Practice Russia: The Russian Socio-Ecological Unit, Climate Scorecard, 13 May 2021, url. The information is published by Moscow-based Environmental Crisis Group which publishes analyses and data by activists of the Socio-Ecological Unit. See, EKG, O nas [About us], n.d., url; Environmental Crisis Group, LinkedIn, n.d., url

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  EKG, Обзор за 2024 год [Review for 2024], 24 January 2025, url

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  UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Russian Federation, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation, Mariana Katzarova,15 September 2025, url, para. 54

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  EKG, Обзор за 2024 год [Review for 2024], 24 January 2025, url; UN Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in the Russian Federation, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation, Mariana Katzarova,15 September 2025, url, para. 56

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  EKG, Обзор за 2024 год [Review for 2024], 24 January 2025, url

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