

Judiciary independence: why should ecologists care?

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Abstract

We discuss the links between political governance systems and ecological research, education and environmental policy, focusing on the ongoing radical changes to the judicial systems in Israel. This judicial revision has already restricted academic freedom and environmental laws, and has impacted regulatory actions. We are concerned about future defunding of ecological research and nature conservation programs, reduced cross-border ecological collaboration, restrictions of academic teaching of ecology and evolution, a brain drain of ecologists, weakening enforcement of environmental laws, and increased power to polluting corporates. Israel's unique biodiversity, already threatened by its rapidly growing population and high development pressures, make these concerns all the more pressing. We believe that weakening judicial oversight of government actions in other countries is generating similar threats at a global scale.

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