

REPORT

ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS OF TIBET

CHINA'S PERSECUTION OF TIBETAN
ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS



INTERNATIONAL
CAMPAIGN
FOR TIBET

JUNE 2022



About ICT

The International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) is a not-for-profit advocacy group that works to promote human rights and democratic freedoms for the people of Tibet. First established in Washington, DC in 1988, we are the largest Tibet support group in the world with offices in Amsterdam, Berlin and Brussels. We monitor and report on events inside Tibet, advocate for the human rights of Tibetans in national and international platforms, and work to preserve Tibet's unique cultural identity.

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Geographical note

The term 'Tibetan Plateau' is used at various points in the report, referring to the vast elevated plateau that is historically, ethnically, and culturally Tibetan. Tibet was traditionally comprised of three main regions: Amdo (northeastern Tibet), Kham (eastern Tibet) and U-Tsang (central and western Tibet). The Tibet Autonomous Region was established by the Chinese government in 1965 and covers the area of Tibet west of the Yangtse River (Tibetan: Driчу), including part of Kham, although it is often referred to now as 'central Tibet' in English. The rest of Amdo and Kham have been incorporated into provinces of the PRC, where they were designated as Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures and Tibetan Autonomous Counties. As a result, most of Qinghai and parts of Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan Provinces are designated by the Chinese authorities as 'Tibetan'. ICT uses the term 'Tibet' to refer to all of these Tibetan areas currently under the illegal occupation of the People's Republic of China.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Between 2012 and 2020, approximately 1,540 land and environmental defenders globally were killed. In 2019, an estimated 40% of the 304 human rights defenders killed were environmental defenders. Although many Tibetans have been persecuted and even killed for protecting their environment, their efforts and the environmental concerns they raise are less recognized by the international community, because the Chinese government and international community treat all Tibetan grievances as only related to the territorial conflict. While Tibetans continue to resist China's illegal occupation of Tibet since 1949-50, Tibetans also work to carve out spaces within the People's Republic of China, where they can live a life with dignity to shape the decisions that determine how their lives and the local environment are governed.

The failure to recognize Tibet as a major focal point of environmental destruction and climate change has long term de-stabilising effects for 40 per cent of the world's population who rely on the ecosystem services provided by the Tibetan plateau. The Tibetan plateau is on the frontlines of climate change with temperatures rising at least two times faster than the global average. As the 'Third Pole' and Asia's 'water tower', the Tibetan plateau holds the largest volume of frozen freshwater outside the polar regions and is the source of Asia's eight great rivers; ultimately sustaining the livelihoods of up to 1.4 billion people who live downstream. How climate change impacts the Tibetan plateau, and whether local Tibetans are empowered to mitigate and adapt to the changes is a critical question for the international community.

Given the global blind spot on Tibet's critical environment and the Tibetan environmental defenders who work to protect it, this report attempts to recognise the Tibetan environmental defenders who have been persecuted. It collates and analyses information on 50 cases of known Tibetan environmental defenders who have been reportedly persecuted since 2008.

Over the last two decades, Chinese government development policies have scaled up mining, energy, infrastructure, and urbanization projects across Tibet. Of the 50 Tibetan environmental defender cases surveyed, 21 Tibetan environmental defenders are currently serving sentences in prison with an average sentence length of eight and a half years. Five have completed their prison sentences, however it is not certain that all five have been released. The whereabouts of 20 Tibetan environmental defenders remains unknown, which demonstrates the difficulties of circumventing the Chinese government's strict information controls. Four environmental defenders have died due to abuse by state agents: one individual was fatally shot during a protest, while three died in custody.

Tibetan civil society actors, their knowledge of the unique environment and their traditional communal and subsistence-based practices are needed to protect and also build vitality and resilience in the land.

The International Campaign for Tibet recommends governments, the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council, UNDP, UNEP, and UNFCCC:

- press China to uphold its human rights obligations and guarantee and protect the rights of the Tibetan environmental defenders, and release them unconditionally if detained;
 - specifically raise the cases of the 16 Tibetan environmental defenders identified on the priority list in Appendix A, requesting their release, information about their cases, and their wellbeing;
- press China to protect the rights of Tibetan environmental defenders to seek information, freely express their opinion, associate, assemble, participate in decision-making, protect their livelihood and home, and seek redress and remedy;
- ensure free and prior informed consent; the inclusion of the Tibetan community in the decision-making and implementation process of development projects; the use of thorough and transparent environmental impact assessments projects on the Tibetan plateau;
- press China to protect and promote Tibetan language learning and practice, as it is the medium in which traditional knowledge and experience is carried and communicated;
- promote the opening up of the Tibetan plateau for scientific research and international collaboration by:
 - cooperating with countries in the region to establish a regional environmental council to facilitate scientific research and transparency.
 - pressing China to facilitate a country visit to China by the Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment and/ or the Special Rapporteur on human rights and climate change.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive, stable Southeast Asia riparian environmental and security program designed to provide essential water resources to downstream populations, address increasing water pollution, adequately prepares for climate change.
- Challenge China's ecological civilization policy and self-representation as a leader in global climate policy and action. China's activities in Tibet reveal its exclusionary, geo-engineering, and dangerously unsustainable approach to climate change and environmental management.



INTRODUCTION

The death in custody of Kunchok Jinpa, a tour guide by profession and an environmental defender by passion, on 6 February 2021 outraged the international community.¹ At the time of his death, the 51-year old Jinpa had served eight years of his 21-year prison sentence for sharing information with foreign media about environmental and political protests in Driru county, Nagchu (CH: Naqu) prefecture in 2013. Moments before his arrest, Jinpa posted a message on his WeChat account reaffirming his commitment to reporting on local issues:

“I am now at the bank of a river. There are many people behind me watching me, and I am sure to be arrested. Even if they arrest me, I am not afraid, even if they kill me, I have no regrets. But from now on, I will not be able to give reports. If there is no word from me, that means I have been arrested.”

Jinpa's case is one among many cases of persecuted Tibetan environmental defenders in Tibet. As China has escalated its development projects across Tibet in the last twenty years since the launch of the 'Great Western Development' Policy in 2000, hundreds of Tibetan environmental defenders have been arrested for resisting mining, infrastructure and urbanization projects.

Environmental Defenders

The term 'environmental defenders' is often used synonymously with 'land and environmental defenders' or 'environmental human rights defenders'. The United Nations describes all three as individuals and groups who peacefully “strive to protect and promote human rights relating to the environment, including water, air, land, flora and fauna.”² While environmental defenders need not necessarily identify themselves as such, they are characterized through “their actions to protect environmental and land rights.”³ They are often people from local communities fighting to protect their way of life, their livelihood, their lands and the surrounding natural resources against forced displacement, infrastructural projects, land appropriation, mining, pollution and other such dangers.⁴



Kunchok Jinpa died in custody on 6 February 2021, having served eight years of his 21-year prison term for sharing information about environmental and political protests with the outside world.

Source: Human Rights Watch

“Even if they arrest me, I am not afraid, even if they kill me, I have no regrets. But from now on, I will not be able to give reports.”

Kunchok Jinpa, April 2013, WeChat

1 'China: Tibetan Tour Guide Dies from Prison Injuries,' Human Rights Watch, 16 February 2021, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/02/16/china-tibetan-tour-guide-dies-prison-injuries>.

2 'Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders', UN General Assembly, 71st session, UN Doc A/71/281 (3 August 2016), <https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2F71%2F281&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>.

3 ibid.

4 Judith Verweijen, Fran Lambrick, Philippe Le Billon, and Felipe Milanez, “Environmental defenders”: The Power / Disempowerment of a Loaded Term', In Environmental and Land Defenders: Deadly Struggles for Life and Territory, edited by Mary Menton and Philippe Le Billon (New York: Routledge, 2021), pp. 37–49, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354568378_Environmental_defenders_the_power_disempowerment_of_a_loaded_term.



Phakpa Gyaltsen (32 years old) stabbed himself and jumped off a building on 7 May 2014 to protest a new mining project in Tongbar town, Dzogang (CHN: Zuogang) county, Chamdo (CHN: Qamdo) Prefecture, Tibet Autonomous Region.

Source: Radio Free Asia

Internationally, Tibet is primarily seen through the lens of a political and territorial conflict, and is not considered as a major focal point of environmental destruction and climate change.

In the case of Tibet, Tibetan environmental defenders have been fighting to protect their distinct way of life, their lands and natural resources against extensive mining, damming, land expropriation, and infrastructure projects. Tibetans are resisting these developments, because there are no opportunities to shape environmental and climate policy, despite having “centuries of accumulated skill and wisdom in managing the vast and challenging space of the Tibetan Plateau.”⁵ Without alternative opportunities for meaningful intervention, Tibetans have been forced to resort to protests and petitions. Instead of embracing the knowledge and environmental commitment of Tibetans, the Chinese state has criminalized environmental activism, imprisoning and, in some cases, even killing those who resist or share information on environmentally destructive activities.

According to the non-government organization Global Witness, 1,540 land and environmental defenders were killed globally between 2012 and 2020.⁶ In 2019, an estimated 40 % of the 304 human rights defenders killed were environmental defenders.⁷ However, because the Chinese Communist Party state has rendered Tibet off limits to international media and organizations, there is a dearth of information about Tibetan environmental defenders in Tibet. Tibetan environmental defenders are also less visible as environmental protectors because they are routinely labelled political dissidents and charged with criminal offences for being “members of black and evil forces”, “separatists”, or “endangering state security”. Internationally, Tibet is primarily seen through the lens of a political and territorial conflict, and is not considered as a major focal point of environmental destruction and climate change.

This report attempts to recognize and acknowledge the Tibetan environmental defenders in Tibet who have been reportedly persecuted, defined as detained arbitrarily, arrested, tried, and/or sentenced since 2008. The year 2008 is selected, as it marked the beginning of a wave of protests which spread across Tibet prior to and after the opening of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. The year also marks a significant shift in China’s policies in Tibet from gradual integration to accelerated and aggressive assimilation and preemptive policing. It is important to note that environmental activism and the persecution of environmental defenders predate 2008, however 2008 is selected as destructive development projects and harsh crackdowns accelerated after the year 2008.

Although this report collates cases of persecuted environmental defenders, it does not include individuals, like Phakpa Gyaltsen, who have taken their life in protest against environmental policies. The 32-year old Phakpa Gyaltsen stabbed himself and jumped off a building on 7 May 2014 to protest a new mining project in Tongbar town, Dzogang (CHN: Zuogang) county, Cham-

5 Gabriel Lafitte, ‘Tibet: Nomads caught between climate change and government ‘conservation’’, in *Minority and Indigenous Trends 2019*, Minority Rights Group International, June 2019, pp 125-127, https://minorityrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2019_MR_Report_170x240_V7_WEB.pdf.

6 ‘1540 land and environmental defenders were killed between 2012 and 2020’, Global Witness, 2022, <https://www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/environmental-activists/numbers-lethal-attacks-against-defenders-2012/>.

7 ‘Global Analysis 2019’, Frontline Defenders, 2020, p. 7, https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/sites/default/files/global_analysis_2019_web.pdf.

do (CHN: Qamdo) Prefecture, Tibet Autonomous Region.⁸ Although Phakpa Gyaltzen may have felt intimidation and threats, such that he pre-empted Chinese persecution and potential death in detention, his case does not satisfy the above definition of persecuted, as he was not detained, arrested, tried or sentenced.

It is notable that Phakpa Gyatsen's act of environmental protest is not a unique case. Over 150 Tibetans have self-immolated in protest against Chinese rule, religious persecution, land expropriation, nomad relocation and environmental pollution since 2008.⁹ One case in point is 35-year old Tsering Dondhup, who set himself ablaze near a mining site on 20 November 2012 in Amchok, Sangchu (CHN: Xiahe) county, Kanlho (CHN:Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu province.¹⁰

This report presents information on the known cases of 50 environmental defenders who are currently serving their prison sentences, who have completed¹¹ their prison sentences, and those who have died in custody or amid protests. Given the large-scale surveillance, censorship and information controls in Tibet, as well as the common practice of detaining numerous individuals in a protest incident,¹² the true number of persecuted Tibetan environmental defenders would be at least ten times the recorded figure. While this list is not exhaustive and only contains details of known cases since 2008, the analysis nonetheless provides insights into the environmental issues that concern everyday Tibetans and the persecution they face.

This report begins with an introduction to Tibet's environment, highlighting its significance to the Asian region and global climate system. This is followed by a description of the major threats facing the environment, the persecution of environmental defenders, and the critical role of Tibetan environmental defenders. The report closes with recommendations for action.

DRIRU MINING PROTESTS: 47 DETAINED AND 60 INJURED

- Protests against mining on the sacred Naglha Dzamba mountain first began in 2010. A second major protest in May 2013 was attended by up to 3,500 Tibetans.
- Political re-education programs were enforced to impose loyalty to the Chinese government and suppress community action.
- The requirement to fly the Chinese flag on the roofs of their houses for Chinese National Day led to protests and a severe police crackdown.
- Authorities arrested numerous individuals who resisted political re-education or participated in earlier mining protests. Chinese authorities targeted influential leaders, such as writers, singers and religious leaders, as well as those suspected of spreading information about the events in Driru.
- At least 47 individuals were arrested and 60 people were injured when police fired into a crowd of protesters.

Source: 'Driru County: The New Hub of Tibetan Resistance', *Tibet Watch*, 2014.

8 'Tibetan Death Sparks Wider Protest Against Chinese Mine', Radio Free Asia, 9 May 2014, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/wider-05092014151245.html>.

9 'Self-immolation fact sheet', International Campaign for Tibet, 6 April 2022, <https://savetibet.org/tibetan-self-immolations/>.

10 'Tibetan Man Self-Immolates in Amchok, Amdo', Voice of America, 20 November 2012, <https://www.voatibetan.com/a/1549512.html>. Tsering Dhondup (also known as Tsering Dundrup) was an environmental advocate who had repeatedly called for self-rule for Tibetans, the return of the Dalai Lama, the Karmapa, Tibetan exiles, and the release of all political prisoners including the Panchen Lama.

11 It is not certain whether all individuals who were due for release at the end of their prison terms have been released.

12 More than 60 Tibetan men were detained during a protest against a new mining site in Tongbar town, Dzogang (CHN: Zuogang) county, Chamdo (CHN: Qamdo) Prefecture, Tibet Autonomous Region. The protest followed the death of Phakpa Gyaltzen's on 7 May 2014. See 'Crackdown launched in another Tibetan county over anti-mining', Radio Free Asia, 13 May 2014 <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/launched-05132014165746.html>, and 'Tibet, 60 men held over anti-mining protests', Asia News, 19 June 2014, <https://www.asianews.it/news-en/Tibet,-60-men-held-over-anti-mining-protests-31406.html>.



SIGNIFICANCE OF TIBET AS THE THIRD POLE

The boundaries of Tibet approximately align with the Tibetan plateau, which spans 2.5 million square kilometres and constitutes one quarter of the land area of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The Tibetan Plateau plays a critical role as a source and channel distributing water, nutrition, and temperature flows to the wider region. The plateau is often called the 'Third Pole' or Asia's 'water tower', because it holds the largest volume of frozen freshwater outside the polar regions and is the source of Asia's eight great rivers.¹³ Almost 2 billion people rely on the water from the Tibetan plateau to sustain their livelihoods and a further 40 per cent of the world's population rely on its ecosystem services, which includes the generation of the east Asian and South Asian monsoons¹⁴.



The Himalayan region and Tibetan plateau are also rich in biodiversity, sitting at the intersection of three biodiversity hotspots – defined as the Earth's most biologically rich, but threatened terrestrial regions.¹⁵ Conserving Tibet's biodiversity ensures the ecosystem is more stable, productive and resilient to environmental stress, such as climate change.

13 Tibetan glacial shrink to cut water supply by 2050', Reuters, 16 January 2009, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-glaciers/tibetan-glacial-shrink-to-cut-water-supply-by-2050-idUSTRE50F76420090116>.

14 Ibid.

15 'What is a biodiversity hotspot?', Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, 2019, <https://www.cepf.net/our-work/biodiversity-hotspots/hotspots-defined>.

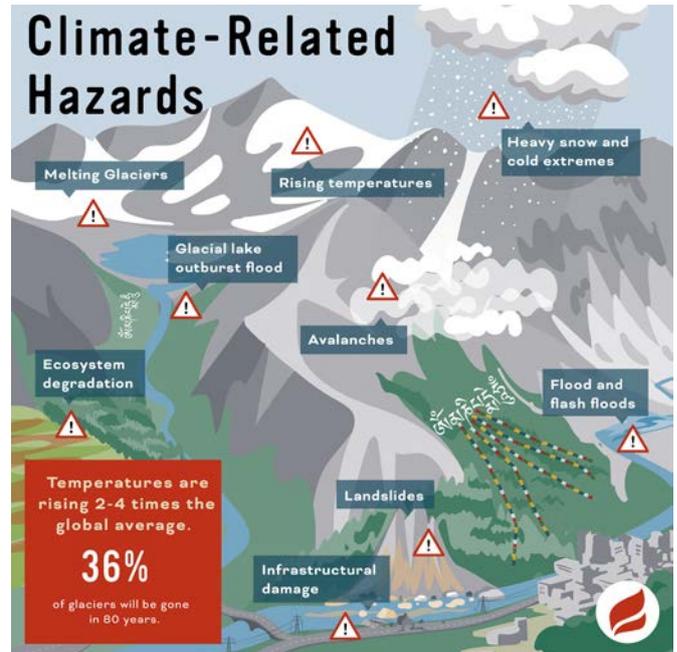


THREATS TO TIBET'S ENVIRONMENT

The Tibetan plateau environment faces four major challenges: 1) climate change, 2) a lack of scientific data, 3) blind infrastructure development and resource extraction, and 4) poor land management practices.

Climate Change

The Tibetan plateau is undergoing rapid climate change due to its high sensitivity to global warming.¹⁶ It is warming at least twice as fast as the global average, as its high altitude and reflective snow and ice cover accelerate the warming effects of rising air pollution and grassland degradation. Current predictions report 36 per cent of the glaciers along the Hindu Kush and Himalayan range will be gone by 2100, if global warming is limited to 1.5 degrees Celsius. If emissions are not cut, at least 66 per cent of the glaciers will be gone in 80 years.¹⁷ Such changes are expected to increase the frequency and intensity of extreme weather conditions such as snowstorms, floods, and droughts, as well as increase biodiversity loss across the plateau.¹⁸



Lack of scientific data and transparency

Despite the serious environmental risks facing the Tibetan plateau, very little is known about the unique ecosystem, its dynamics, and the processes affecting it. Due to geographic and political barriers to access as well as controls on information flow, the region was known as a “white spot” by scientists in 2007 – an area for which there are “little to no data”.¹⁹ While rapid advances in satellite earth observation technology in the early 2010s improved the visibility of remote glaciers, field access and data sharing remain major challenges.²⁰ The lack of scientific data and knowledge poses serious risks for future generations and downstream countries, as it limits the development of predictions and policies to adapt to anticipated changes in the Himalayan region.²¹

16 Tianjun Zhou and Wenxia Zhang, ‘Anthropogenic warming of Tibetan Plateau and constrained future projection’, Environmental research Letters, Issue 16 (2021): 1-10, page 1 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349999968_Anthropogenic_warming_of_Tibetan_Plateau_and_constrained_future_projection.

17 ‘Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate’, IPCC, 2019, <https://www.ipcc.ch/srocc/download-report/>, page 149 (chapter 2, page 18).

18 ‘Global warming reaches Tibet; extreme weather on plateau’, The Hindu: Business Line, 23 March 2014, <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/world/Global-warming-reaches-Tibet-extreme-weather-on-plateau/article20740057.ece>, and ‘Blue Gold from the Highest Plateau: Tibet’s water and global climate change’, International Campaign for Tibet (ICT), December 2015, <https://www.savetibet.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/ICT-Water-Report-2015.pdf>.

19 Elizabeth L. Malone, ‘Changing glaciers and hydrology in Asia addressing vulnerabilities to glacier melt impacts’, USAID, November 2010, http://www.ehproject.org/PDF/ehkm/usaaid-glacier_melt2010.pdf.

20 Ann Rowan, ‘Two-thirds of glacier ice in the Himalayas will be lost by 2100 if climate targets aren’t met’, The Conversation, 3 August 2020, <https://theconversation.com/two-thirds-of-glacier-ice-in-the-himalayas-will-be-lost-by-2100-if-climate-targets-arent-met-143207>.

21 ‘Measuring glacier change in the Himalayas’, United Nations Environment Programme: Global Environmental Alert Service, September 2012.; https://na.unep.net/geas/getUNEPPPageWithArticleIDScript.php?article_id=91.



Intentionally blind infrastructure development and resource extraction

Although the Chinese government adopted an 'eco-civilization policy' in 2012-2013²² that seeks to align environmentally-friendly initiatives with economic pursuits, the Chinese government continues to pursue blind and commercial infrastructure projects in Tibet that are designed and implemented without regard for environmental impacts or local community concerns. These projects, which include rail roads, highways, and power grids, combined with resource extraction projects such as hydropower dams and mining create economic and environmental costs that disproportionately impact Tibetans. There are at least 100 mines across Tibet.²³ When established, they are often located in sacred sites or areas that require the forced relocation of Tibetans. Many local Tibetans face threats to the health of their community, animals and environment. To highlight just two examples: the open-pit Muli coal mine in Qinghai spread black coal dust across the landscape, causing grassland degradation and the loss of ice frozen below the top soil,²⁴ while the Jiajika lithium mine in Sichuan twice (in October 2013 and May 2016) leaked toxic chemicals into the local water supply.²⁵ Mounting evidence also challenges the assumed climate benefits of such projects. As well damming's role in bolstering the CCPs agenda of regional hegemony through control of vital water resources is becoming an increasing global security risk.

Hydropower dam projects also disturb local ecosystems by relocating populations temporarily diverting rivers, blocking the natural flow of nutrient rich soil and interrupting highly seismic regions. Our current research indicates over 200 dams are operating, under construction or planned across the Tibetan Plateau. While primarily designed for power generation, these dams also threaten downstream ecosystems that rely on the regular flow of water, nutrients and aquatic life.²⁶

22 'China: an ecological civilisation?', European Institute for China Studies, October 2020, http://www.eurics.eu/upload/document/20201028101039_eurics-october2020.pdf.

23 Beth Walker, 'Mining threatens waters of the "Third Pole"', China Dialogue, 13 May 2011, <https://www.chinadialogue.net/blog/4291-Mining-threatens-waters-of-the-Third-Pole-/en>.

24 Dominique Mosbergen, 'Illegal coalmine encroaching on nature reserve in north-west China', Huffpost, 7 August 2014, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/tibet-melting-glaciers-avalanches_n_584e552de4b04c8e2bb061ee.

25 'Environmental Protests on the Tibetan Plateau', Tibet Watch, January 2015, http://www.tibetwatch.org/uploads/2/4/3/4/24348968/environmental_protests_on_the_tibetan_plateau.pdf.

26 'Blue Gold from the Highest Plateau: Tibet's water and global climate change', ICT, December 2015, <https://www.savetibet.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/ICT-Water-Report-2015.pdf>

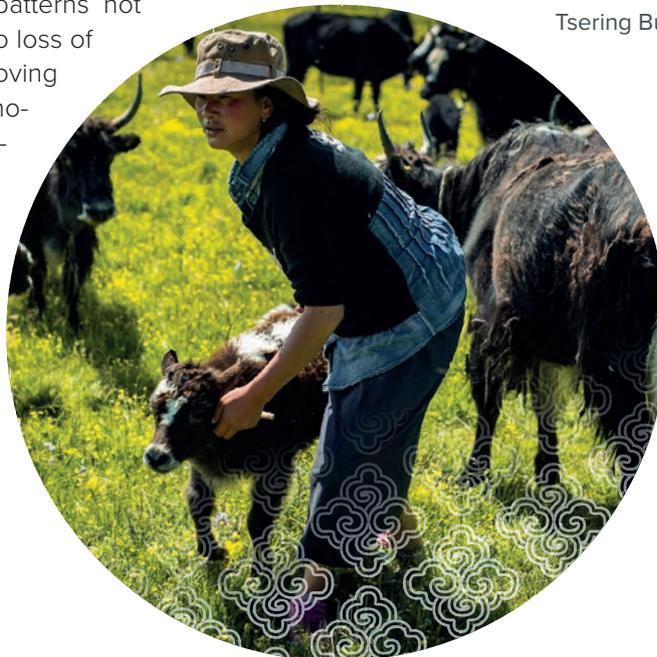
Poor land management policies

Since the 1980s government policies have privatized communal grasslands and sought to move pastoral nomads from their grasslands under the guise of grassland preservation and human development.²⁷ The distribution of communal grasslands to individual households with fencing altered nomadic practices, preventing families from rotating and sharing grazing pastures for the health of their livestock and the local environment. It essentially brought an end to sustainable nomadic life. In addition to altering land use practices, Chinese policies began rolling out nomad relocation policies in the early 2000's.²⁸ Based on available data, at least 1.8 million nomads have been resettled into sedentary houses under various Chinese policies, including the creation of new nature reserves.²⁹

Removing Tibetans from their land has severe long-term harmful impacts. Changing land use patterns not only alters ecosystems, but also leads to loss of cultural heritage and livelihoods. Removing nomads has the additional effect of removing a traditional defense against destructive activities such as mining, and an overreliance on the government to carry out conservation work.³⁰

“Removing nomads has the additional effect of removing a traditional defense against destructive activities such as mining, and an overreliance on the government to carry out conservation work.”

Tsering Bum, 2018



27 Yonten Nyima and Emily T. Yeh, '6. Environmental Issues and conflict in Tibet', in *Ethnic Conflict and Protest in Tibet and Xinjiang: Unrest in China's West*, ed. Ben Hillman and Gray Tuttle (eds.), 2016 (New York Chichester: Columbia University Press), Pages 151-178, page 154.

28 Ibid.

29 'Over 1 million Tibetan nomads choose settlement', *China Daily*, 6 July 2012, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-07/06/content_15555645.html; 'Massive nomad settlement to protect "mother river"', *Xinhua*, 1 December 2012, <http://en.people.cn/90882/8041990.html>; The *China Daily* states over 270,000 nomadic herders have been settled between 2009 and 2012. See 'Over 1 million Tibetan nomads choose settlement', *China Daily*, 6 July 2012, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-07/06/content_15555645.htm; and '青海3万多户农牧民迁新居：“小财政”“托起”大民生'(CHN. 'Qinghai san wan duo hu nong mu min qian xinju: "xiao caizheng "tuoci" da minsheng)'), 'More than 30,000 farmers and herdsmen in Qinghai moved to their new homes: microfinance support the people's livelihood', Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, 5 December 2009, http://www.gov.cn/jrzq/2009-12/05/content_1481036.htm; Li Yang, 'Families moving into the modern era', *China Daily*, 7 August 2015, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/tibet50years/2015-08/07/content_21525294.htm.

30 See Stevens 1993 and 1997 in Tsering Bum, 'Translating ecological migration policy: A conjunctural analysis of Tibetan pastoralist resettlement in China', *Critical Asian Studies*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (2018), pages 518-536, page 523.



THE PERSECUTION OF TIBETAN ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS



Source: Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy.

CASE FILE | NGAWANG JAMPHEL

Age at detention: 45

Background: Also known as Ngawang Jamyang. Ngawang was a highly respected senior monk from Tarmoe monastery, Driru County who pursued monastic studies in India for 18 years between 1989 and 2007.

Case details: Detained on 23 November 2013 in Lhasa in relation to a political crackdown in Driru where mining protests erupted. Previously served a two-year prison term in 2008 on charges of 'having relations with the outside'. Died in Chinese custody. Ngawang's body was returned to his family on 17 December 2013 with clear signs of torture and abuse.

Source: 'Driru Crackdown', Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, 2013.

For centuries Tibetans have been the traditional defenders of the Tibetan plateau. Prior to the Chinese invasion, Tibet's environment historically enjoyed protection by natural geographic barriers and approximately six million Tibetan inhabitants whose sparse distribution, subsistence lifestyles, and animistic and Buddhist traditions have promoted coexistence with nature.

Since the invasion of Tibet in 1949–50, the Chinese government has re-engineered the Tibetan landscape through large infrastructure projects, resource extraction, nomad relocation and urbanization, Han in-migration and the creation of enclosed nature parks. These policies have expanded the human footprint, marginalized traditional inhabitants and significantly altered the ecosystem. Tibetans who have opposed or protested against extensive mining, illegal land grabs, poaching, deforestation, and/or damming have been persecuted by local police or the armed forces, and some have been killed. Protesters are regularly arbitrarily detained and subjected to enforced disappearance. Many are tortured and subjected to inhuman treatments, with some detainees even dying while in custody.³¹

Environmental concerns and criminal charges

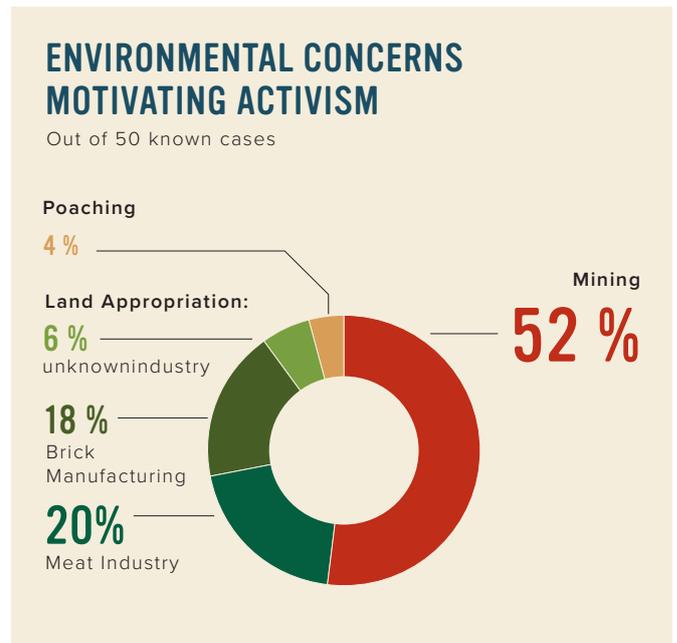
From our analysis of 50 persecuted Tibetan environmental defenders, 21 individuals are currently serving their prison sentences, the whereabouts of 20 individuals are unknown, 5 have reportedly completed their prison sentences, and four individuals have died due to abuse by state agents in a protest or in custody. When assessing their environmental concerns, 26 were protesting against the mining industry, three against poaching, and 21 against land appropriation for various industries, including the meat and brick manufacturing industries.

The analysis shows Tibetan environmental defenders are routinely deprived of their basic human rights including freedom of speech and expression, association and peaceful assembly, and movement. Their legitimate environ-

31 See Appendix and online database for list of all persecuted environmental defenders.

mental concerns are consistently conflated with a 'splittist' agenda.³² As a result, Tibetan environmental defenders are often detained arbitrarily and commonly charged with crimes, such as being "separatists"/"splittist", or part of "black and evil forces", "endangering state security", or 'sharing state secrets".

While it is common practice for the Chinese government to deny Tibetans their right to a fair trial, procedural justice is also severely limited with court documents issued only in the Chinese language (not Tibetan),³³ and no opportunities to meaningfully access a lawyer or present a defense. Trials are a façade, with family members and relatives only learning about the trial after the individual has been tried and sentenced.



32 The Chinese government has also used the counter-terrorism law to criminalize peaceful religious or social activities. Such misrepresentation of legitimate activities has been highlighted by 12 United Nations Human Rights Special Procedures in November 2019, who expressed grave concerns about the enforcement of the counter-terrorism law, which is leading to violations of human rights, particularly for designated minorities. See Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, Special Procedures, Joint Other Letter, OL CHN 18/2019, November 1 2019, <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=24845>.

33 This was also highlighted by the Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination in its concluding observations from its review of China's compliance with the CERD treaty, published in 2018. UN. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Concluding observations on the combined 14th to 17th periodic reports of China (including Hong Kong, China and Macao, China): Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination: draft / prepared by the Country Rapporteur, UN CERD 96th session, UN Doc CERD/C/CHN/CO/R.14-17, (30 August 2018), paragraph 42.



Source: Tsering Woesser'

CASE FILE | KARMA SAMDRUP

Age at detention: 42

Background: A businessman, award-winning conservationist and anti-poaching community leader who co-founded the Qinghai Three River Environmental Protection group.

Case details: Karma was detained on 3 January 2010 in Chengdu, Sichuan. Charged in relation to a dismissed grave robbing case dating back to 1998, he was sentenced to 15 years in prison on 24 June 2010. Karma was reportedly subjected to at least six months of torture.

Current status: Karma is in poor health with no access to visitors since the beginning of the pandemic in early 2020.

Source: 'A sharp knife above his head': the trials and sentencing of three environmentalist brothers in Tibet', 4 August 2010, ICT

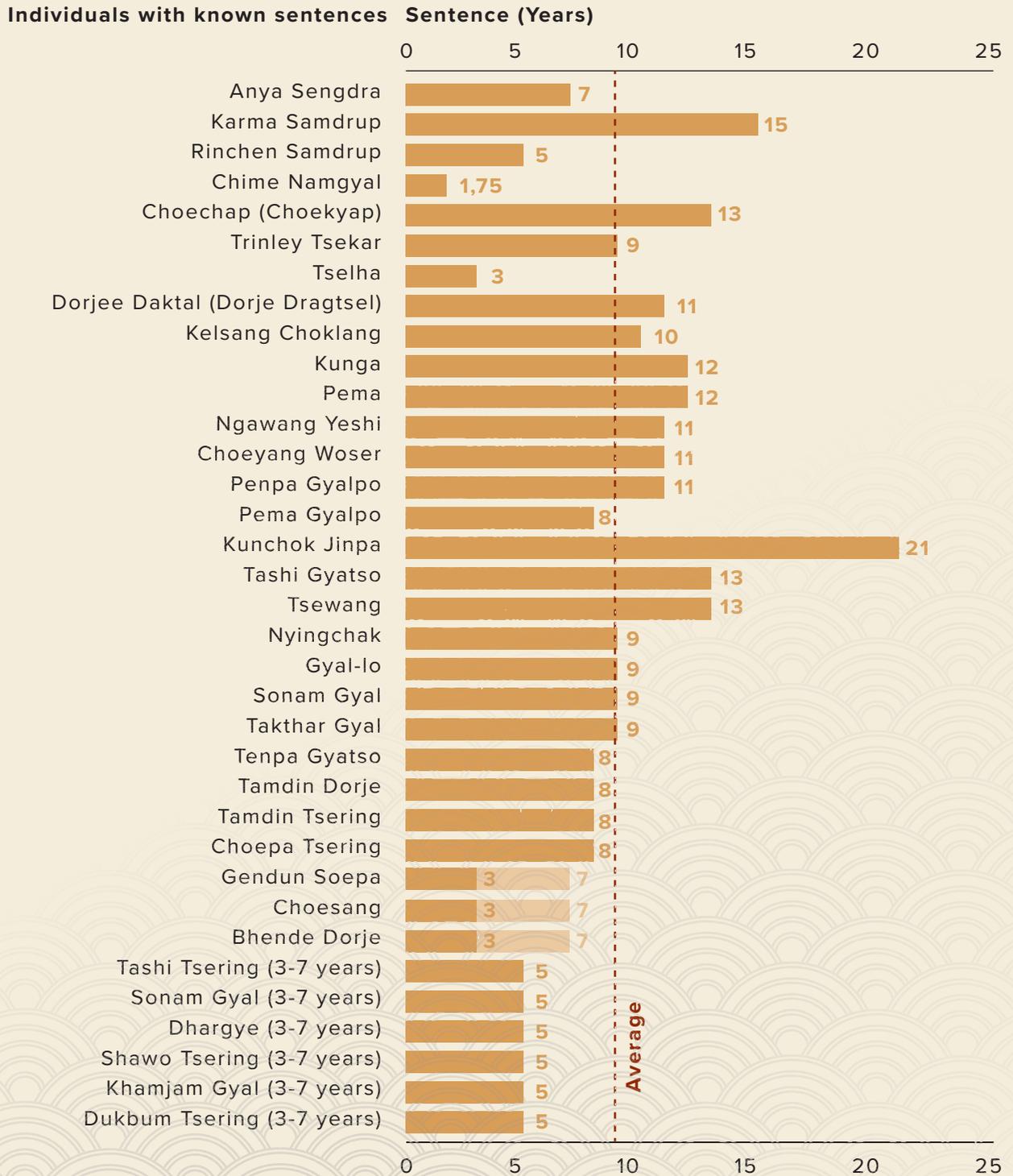
Prison terms

Of the 50 documented cases, the prison sentences handed to 35 of the individuals are known. The sentences range from 1 year and nine months to 21 years, with an average sentence length of nine years. While it is difficult to conclude that 9 years is the average sentence for all environmental defenders, it is clear that prison sentences are long and environmental activism is severely punished and highly discouraged by the state.

Of the 50 document cases, 29 environmental defenders were arbitrarily detained.

Once detained environmental defenders face risk of death in custody due to torture, mistreatment or the denial of adequate medical care while in prison. Eight individuals reported being subjected to torture and other inhuman treatment. Of the eight, three reportedly died of torture while in custody. Given 21 Tibetan environmental defenders remain in prison and the whereabouts of 20 individuals remains unknown, there is serious concern for their wellbeing. It is notable that five documented environmental defenders have completed their prison sentences, however it is unclear if all five have actually been released.

ANALYSIS OF 35 KNOWN PRISON SENTENCES





THE CRITICAL ROLE OF TIBETAN ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS

“[...] the exercise of human rights, including the rights to information, participation and remedy, is vital to the protection of the environment.”

John Knox, 2018, former Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment.

“Tibetan pastoralists are entrapped into accepting decisions made by others, with little space for participation in policy-making. Hence, the problem is political rather than technical in nature.”

Dr. Yonten Nyima, 2019

Any meaningful intervention to protect Tibet’s environment relies on strong links between nature, people and culture. It is people, guided by their cultural values, who can most effectively implement and sustain environmental interventions. However, people must be empowered to act. The relationship between individual rights and the environment was highlighted by the former Special Rapporteur for human rights and the environment, John Knox, who said:

“Human Rights and environmental protection are interdependent: A safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment is necessary for the full enjoyment of a vast range of human rights, including the rights to life, health, food, water and development. At the same time, the exercise of human rights, including the rights to information, participation and remedy, is vital to the protection of the environment.”³⁴

Many of the environmental challenges facing Tibet have been caused and/or exacerbated by the political disempowerment of Tibetans, who have been under the rule of the PRC government since 1949-50. Dr. Yonten Nyima, a Tibetan geographer highlights the glaring political, and not technical, challenge to environmental issues in Tibet. Speaking on nomad resettlement policies, he notes:

“The role of China’s authoritarian political system, including the absence of participatory governance and the imposition of uniformity over diversity, cannot be overstated. A fundamental problem in Tibetan pastoralism vis-à-vis the Chinese state is that Tibetan pastoralists are entrapped into accepting decisions made by others, with little space for participation in policy-making. Hence, the problem is political rather than technical in nature.”³⁵

Tibetans: natural and traditional frontline defenders of the Tibetan plateau

Tibetans are the people on the ground who know how the environment changes with the seasons, what unusual weather is, how the local animals behave and how to navigate tough terrain and conditions on foot, horseback or with yaks. They have protected their land, mountains, rivers, lakes, and forests through their folklores and religious beliefs. This is the kind of valuable partner governments and scientists need when conducting research and monitoring studies. It is also the type of leading partner needed to protect the land supporting Asia’s population, because it is their home. Tibetans are not inter-

34 United Nations, ‘Report of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment’, 24 January 2018, (A/HRC/37/59), page 2.

35 Yonten Nyima, Review of Tibetan Pastoralists and Development: Negotiating the Future of Grassland Livelihoods edited by Andreas Gruschke and Ingo Breuer. Pastoralism Vol. 9, Issue. 17 (2019): 1-4, page 2, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13570-019-0154-8>.

mittently sent to locations, like scientists or government officers, to conduct research for a couple of years. It is their home and their futures are tied to the wellbeing of the land.

Tibetan language and stories: carriers of environmental knowledge

Tibetans disseminate knowledge and create awareness about the fragile ecosystem through storytelling. Such stories enlighten, empower and serve the next generation of environmental stewards. Huatse, a Tibetan anthropologist and former nomad, highlights how such local traditional knowledge makes them best placed to devise initiatives to restore the vitality of land. He cites one example of a local community designing ways to counter the desertification of their grasslands.

When planting grass seeds, they needed to plant a variety of seeds that could withstand the intense sun and winds, and avoid becoming a monoculture. A local female herder suggested,

“We should let the hooves of our yaks push the seeds into the sand and the soil. Yak’s hooves cannot be replaced with any other technology because yaks also carry seeds in their body hair. As yaks trample the soil where the seeds are planted, all kinds of seeds from the yaks’ hair and hooves will mingle with one another. Yak dung is also the best fertilizer for the growth of many kinds of grasses and flowers.”³⁶ This solution accounted for all conditions needed to ensure the seeds growth, as well as grassland biodiversity. This simple advice has now become one of the most innovative land restoration projects in eastern Tibet.

Sadly, little attention is given to projects that are not large-scale, top-down, geo-engineering interventions. Such uniform interventions are not suitable for regions like Tibet, where conditions differ greatly across the landscape. Truly sustainable land practices are “inseparable from Tibetan pastoralists and their livestock, and most importantly their collective wisdom”.³⁷



36 ‘Huatse Gyal and Sangjie Zhaxi’, Environmental Futures – University of Colorado, Boulder, April 4 2021, <https://www.colorado.edu/project/environmental-futures/2021/04/04/huatse-gyal-sangjie-zhaxi>.

37 Ibid.



A MISGUIDED AND EXCLUSIVE FOCUS ON MATERIAL KNOWLEDGE

“What concerns me most is that people who know a lot about their land, namely Tibetan pastoralists, have been treated as the destroyers of their land.”

More needs to be done to counter the purely materialist, scientific approach to environmental management. It is important to elevate the voices of populations on the ground – in this case, Tibetans – as they can offer solutions that are not considered by so-called experts with different cultural backgrounds, experiences, and biases embedded in different landscapes. Although traditional Tibetan knowledge has the potential to improve land management, it is neither protected nor embraced. Huatse, the Tibetan anthropologist and former nomad mentioned above, highlights the dangers of losing the intimate knowledge of the habitat and its animals, and the long-term costs to Tibet's environment.





“What concerns me the most is that people who know a lot about their land, namely Tibetan pastoralists, have been treated as the destroyers of their land mainly in the name of overgrazing. People who know so little about the land on the Tibetan Plateau are so confident in their own perceived “scientific” knowledge of the land that very much shape the land policies in pastoral Tibet today.”³⁸

Under Chinese occupation, both Tibet's land and Tibetan minds have been colonized to believe a narrative of Tibetan inferiority, backwardness and low cultural worth. As such, Tibetans are losing confidence in their knowledge, in their traditions, and in the value of their socio-cultural world. What's more, the knowledge stored in stories, songs and idioms in the Tibetan language is being lost as China seeks to eliminate Tibetan-language learning and use.³⁹

“[...] many Tibetan pastoralists had internalized their externally-imposed inferiority. The Chinese state's systematic efforts to belittle and delegitimize Tibetan pastoralists' way of life manifested in their daily speech. Whenever they answered my questions, their responses were prefaced with self-deprecating expressions such as “Of course, as a nomad, I don't have any knowledge and education.”

Many indeed have stopped believing in themselves. They have also stopped believing in the pricelessness of their wisdom in relation to their land and world, and in endeavours such as identifying the names and relations of our precious plants and flowers.”

“[...] many Tibetan pastoralists had internalized their externally-imposed inferiority. The Chinese state's systematic efforts to belittle and delegitimize Tibetan pastoralists' way of life manifested in their daily speech. Many indeed have stopped believing in themselves. They have also stopped believing in the pricelessness of their wisdom in relation to their land and world [...].”

Huatse Gyal, 4 April 2021

38 Ibid.

39 'China renews attacks on remain Tibetan-language schools,' ICT, 30 November 2021, <https://savetibet.org/china-renews-attacks-on-remaining-tibetan-language-schools/>.



RIGHTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS

Effective and sustainable environmental monitoring and management is best achieved by empowering local communities who are most impacted by environmental degradation to act as a first line of defense. Local communities also already fulfil these roles in an informal capacity. In the case of Tibetans, their local knowledge, practices (such as nomadic, seasonal and communal grazing) and traditional beliefs (rooted in animist Bön and Buddhist belief systems) that espouse non-violence and mountain and lake worship make them ideal stewards to protect and improve the Tibetan plateau ecosystem and build its resilience to climate change. But in order to safely fulfil this role, they need to be protected when they speak out or organise people to protect their environment.

Numerous United Nations (UN) human rights instruments defend the right of individuals to protect their environment. On 8 October 2021, the UN Human Rights Council recognized the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right.⁴⁰ Recognizing the contributions of environmental defenders, the UN called on States to protect them.⁴¹

“Sadly, little attention is given to projects that are not large-scale, top-down, geo-engineering interventions. Such uniform interventions are not suitable for regions like Tibet, where conditions differ greatly across the landscape.”

International Campaign for Tibet

Additional international laws protect the rights of environmental defenders to seek information, to express their opinion, associate, protect their livelihood, and home. They include the UN Declaration on Human Rights (1948), the Convention of Civil and Political Rights (1976), the Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1976), the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders (1998), the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), and Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992).

The Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, although customary law and not legally binding, sets out notable protections, such as the right to know, seek obtain, receive and hold information,⁴² the right to submit criticisms and proposals of improvement to government authorities,⁴³ the right to access independent, impartial and competent judiciary and effective remedy.⁴⁴

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples protects the right to free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC), while Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992) upholds the right to access information, participate in decision-making processes, and crucially, the right to enjoy “effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy”.⁴⁵

40 United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution 48/13, The Human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, A/HRC/RES/48/13 (8 October 2021).

41 United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution 40/11, Recognizing the contribution of environmental human rights defenders to the enjoyment of human rights, environmental protection and sustainable development, A/HRC/RES/40/11 (21 March 2019).

42 Article 6 of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 53/144, Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, A/RES/53/144 (8 March 1999).

43 Ibid, Article 8.

44 Ibid, Article 9.

45 Principle 10 of United Nations General Assembly, Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. I) (12 August 1992). See also ‘Principle 10’, United Nations Environment Programme, 2021, <https://www.unep.org/civil-society-engagement/partnerships/principle-10>.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The International Campaign for Tibet addresses the following recommendations to governments, the United Nations (UN) Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Environment Program (UNEP), and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC):

- Governments, the OHCHR and UN HRC should call on the Chinese government to cease the persecution of the Tibetan environmental defenders, release the Tibetan environmental defenders in prison unconditionally and guarantee free and fair trials with an independent judiciary and access to legal counsel, as well as avenues for redress and compensation:
 - Specifically raise the cases of the 16 Tibetan environmental defenders on the priority list in the Appendix A, requesting their release as well as information on their cases and wellbeing.
- Governments and the offices of the OHCHR, HRC, UNDP, UNEP, and the UNFCCC should call on the Chinese government to bring its policies in conformity with binding and customary international laws and standards that protect the rights of environmental defenders to seek information, freely express their opinion, associate and assemble, participate in decision-making processes, protect their livelihood and home, and seek redress and remedy in cases of injustice.
- Encourage the Chinese government to uphold the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) with local Tibetans in relation to all decisions over development of Tibet's resources, including all mining and hydro-power projects on the Tibetan plateau. In addition, urge China to adopt consistent and robust environmental and social standards for extractive industries and infrastructure development in Tibet, such as environmental and social impact assessments.
- The Tibetan-language carries valuable environmental and social knowledge needed to sustain a healthy and resilient Tibetan plateau. The Chinese government must reverse its policy to systematically suppress the continuation of the Tibetan language. Particularly egregious are educational policies that enforce Chinese language learning from pre-school age, including forced separation of young children to Chinese-based boarding schools.

- Promote opening the Tibetan plateau for scientific research and international collaboration.
 - Urge China to facilitate a country visit to China by the Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment and/or the Special Rapporteur on human rights and climate change.
 - Cooperate with countries in the region to facilitate the creation of a regional environmental council that discusses and implements means and mechanisms to protect the fragile environment of the Tibetan plateau.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive, stable Southeast Asia riparian environmental and security program designed to provide essential water resources to downstream populations, address increasing water pollution, adequately prepares for climate change, and counters the Chinese government's use of water for literal and diplomatic regional control.
- Challenge China's ecological civilization policy and self-representation as a leader in global climate policy and action. China's failure to acknowledge the serious environmental issues and climate change challenges in Tibet, as well as failure to engage local Tibetans in designing a response to climate change reveals China's exclusionary, geo-engineering, and dangerously unsustainable approach to climate change and environmental management.





APPENDIX: LIST OF 50 PERSECUTED TIBETAN ENVIROMENTAL DEFENDERS

Notes:

- As the Tibetan language is distinct from Mandarin Chinese and uses its own alphabet, Tibetan names are often transliterated into Chinese characters in different ways. Multiple transliterations can be used. We have attempted to account for the common spelling variations of names; they are provided in brackets.
- The following abbreviations are used for information that is 'Not available' (N/AVL) and 'Not applicable' (N/APL).
- A detailed list of the 50 Tibetan Environmental Defenders analyzed is available at <https://savetibet.de/tibetan-environmental-defenders-list-2008-2022/>.

A. Priority List: 16 Enviromental Defenders

Age of arrest	Date of arrest	Expected release date	Charge	Sentence
Anya Sengdra (also A-Nya Sengdra) ཨན་ཡ་སངས་ལྷ་ (ཨ་ཉ་སངས་ལྷ) 阿亚桑扎				
47	4. 9. 2018	3. 9. 2025	Provoking troubles, forming a mob to disturb social order, and other evil cases	7 years
Karma Samdrup ཀམ་བསམ་སྐྱེལ། 嘎玛桑珠				
42	3. 1. 2010	2. 1. 2025	Involvement in a 12-year old case of grave robbing	15 years
Choechap (Choekyap) ཚོས་སྐྱབས། 曲加 (求加, 秋嘉)				
N/AVL	Beginning of 2013	2026	(1) Instigating the people's protest against mining at Naglha Dzamba mountain, (2) maintaining outside contacts and (3) attempting to 'split Chinese nation'	13 years
Dorjee Daktal (Dorje Dragtsel) འོ་རྗེ་གྲགས་ཐལ། (འོ་རྗེ་གྲགས་ཚལ།) 多杰 (多吉) 扎泽				
N/AVL	3. 10. 2013	2024	N/AVL	11 years

Source: ICT



Source: ICT



Source: Tibet Watch



Source: Tibet Watch





Source: TCHRD

Age of arrest	Date of arrest	Expected release date	Charge	Sentence
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Kelsang Choklang | སྐལ་བཟང་ཚུགས་གླང་། | 格桑 (尕藏) 确朗

N/AVL	2013	2023	N/AVL	10 Years
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Kunga | ཀུན་དགའ། | 根呷

N/AVL	April 2011	2023	N/AVL	12 Years
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Pema | པམ། | 白玛 (班玛)

N/AVL	April 2011	2023	N/AVL	12 Years
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Ngawang Yeshi | འག་དབང་ཡེ་ཤེས། | 阿旺 (尼旺) 益希 (益西)

N/AVL	April 2011	2022	N/AVL	11 Years
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Choeyang Woser | ཚོས་གཡང་འོ་འཇེ། | 曲央 (曲杨, 求央) 唯色

N/AVL	April 2011	2022	N/AVL	11 Years
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Penpa Gyalpo | པེན་པ་རྒྱལ་པོ། | 边巴加布

N/AVL	April 2011	2022	N/AVL	11 Years
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Source: TCHRD

Khenrab | མཁེན་རབས། | 青热 (钦热, 庆惹)

36	Late February 2018	N/AVL	Engaging in "separatist activity"	N/AVL
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Source: TCHRD

Rinchen Namdol | རིན་ཆེན་ནམ་གྲོལ། | 仁钦 (仁青) 南卓 (昂卓)

39	Late February 2018	N/AVI	Engaging in "separatist activity"	N/AVL
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Source: TCHRD

Tsultrim Gonpo | ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་མགོན་པོ། | 仁钦 (仁青) 南卓 (昂卓)

50s	Late February 2018	N/AVL	Engaging in "separatist activity"	N/AVL
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Source: TCHRD

Jangchup Ngodup | རྒྱང་རྒྱལ་སངས་ལྷུག། | 降秋 (向秋, 桑秋) 欧珠

60s	Late February 2018	N/AVL	Engaging in "separatist activity"	N/AVL
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Source: TCHRD

Sogru Abhu | སོག་རུ་ཨ་བུ། | 索如 · 阿布

39	Late February 2018	N/AVL	Engaging in "separatist activity"	N/AVL
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Source: TCHRD

Namsey | རྣམ་སེས། | 朗色 (昂色, 南色)

39	Late February 2018	N/AVL	Engaging in "separatist activity"	N/AVL
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B. Currently detained: 21 Cases

Age of arrest	Date of arrest	Charge	Sentence
Anya Sengdra (also A-Nya Sengdra) ཨ་ཡ་སངས་མཚོ་ (ཨ་ཉ་སངས་མཚོ་) 阿亚桑扎			
47	4 September 2018	Provoking troubles, forming a mob to disturb social order, and other evil cases	7 Years
Karma Samdrup ཀམ་བསམ་གྲུབ། 嘎玛桑珠			
42	3 January 2010	Involvement in a 12-year old case of grave robbing	15 Years
Choechap (Choekyap) ཚོམ་སྐབས། 曲加 (求加, 秋嘉)			
N/AVL	Beginning of 2013	(1) Instigating the people's protest against mining at Naglha Dzamba mountain, (2) maintaining outside contacts and (3) attempting to 'split Chinese nation'	13 years
Dorjee Daktal (Dorje Dragtsel) འོ་རྗེ་གྲགས་ཐལ། (འོ་རྗེ་གྲགས་ཚལ།) 多杰 (多吉) 扎泽			
N/AVL	3. 10. 2013	N/AVL	11 years
Kelsang Choklang ཀལ་བཟང་ཕྱོགས་སྒྲུབ། 格桑 (尕藏) 确朗			
N/AVL	2013	N/AVL	10 Years
Kunga ཀུན་དགལ། 根呷			
N/AVL	April 2011	N/AVL	12 Years
Pema པལ། 白玛 (班玛)			
N/AVL	April 2011	N/AVL	12 Years
Ngawang Yeshi འཇམ་དབང་ཡེ་ཤེས། 阿旺 (尼旺) 益希 (益西)			
N/AVL	April 2011	N/AVL	11 Years
Choeyang Woser ཚོམ་གཡང་འོ་འཕྲུལ། 曲央 (曲杨, 求央) 唯色			
N/AVL	April 2011	N/AVL	11 Years
Penpa Gyalpo པལ་རྒྱལ་པོ། 边巴加布			
N/AVL	April 2011	N/AVL	11 Years
Dhongye འོ་རྩ་དགོ། 顿格 (东格)			
50	2 April 2018	Leaking state secrets	N/AVL
Tashi Gyatso འཇམ་གྲུ་མཚོ། 扎西嘉措 (江措)			
N/AVL	2019	Disturbing social order	13 Years and 70,000 Yuan fine

Source: ICT



Source: ICT



Source: Tibet Watch



Source: Tibet Watch



	Age of arrest	Date of arrest	Charge	Sentence
	Tsewang ཚེ་དབང། 才旺(次旺)			
	N/AVL	2019	Disturbing social order	13 Years and 70,000 Yuan fine
	Nyingchak སྡིང་བཙག། 娘七合			
	N/AVL	2019	Disturbing social order	9 years and 50,000 Yuan fine
	Gyal-lo ལྷུལ་ལོ། 加老			
	N/AVL	2019	Disturbing social order	9 years and 50,000 Yuan fine
	Sonam Gyal བསོད་ནམས་ལྷུལ། 索朗(索娜, 索南)加			
	N/AVL	2019	Disturbing social order	9 years and 50,000 Yuan fine
	Takthar Gyal ལྷུག་དཀར་ལྷུལ། 德合太加			
	N/AVL	2019	Disturbing social order	9 years and 50,000 Yuan fine
	Tenpa Gyatso བསྟན་པ་ལྷུལ་ཚོ། 旦巴嘉措(江措)			
	N/AVL	2019	Disturbing social order	8 years and 50,000 Yuan fine
	Tamdin Dorje ལྷ་མགོན་དོ་རྗེ། 丹珍多杰(多吉)			
	N/AVL	2019	Disturbing social order	8 years and 50,000 Yuan fine
	Tamdin Tsering ལྷ་མགོན་ཚེ་རིང། 丹珍才让(次仁)			
	N/AVL	2019	Disturbing social order	8 years and 50,000 Yuan fine
	Choepa Tsering ཚོམ་པ་ཚེ་རིང། 曲帕才让(次仁)			
	N/AVL	2019	Disturbing social order	8 years and 50,000 Yuan fine

C. Released: 5 Cases

Age of arrest	Date of arrest	Charge	Sentence
Rinchen Samdrup རིན་ཆེན་བསམ་གྲུབ། 仁钦 (仁青) 桑珠			
44	August 2009	"Incitement to split the nation"	5 years
Chime Namgyal འཛི་མེད་ནུས་ཀྲུལ། 其美南木加			
38	August 2009	"Endangering state security"	1 year and 9 months re-education through labor
Trinley Tsekar འཕྲིན་ལམ་ཚེ་དཀར། 赤列次嘎 (才尕, 泽嘎)			
22	Beginning of 2013	(1) Instigating the people's protest against mining at Naglha Dzamba mountain, (2) maintaining outside contacts and (3) attempting to 'split Chinese nation'	13 years
Tselha ཚེ་ལྷ། 才拉 (次拉, 泽拉)			
N/AVL	Beginning of 2013	(1) Instigating the people's protest against mining at Naglha Dzamba mountain, (2) maintaining outside contacts and (3) attempting to 'split Chinese nation'	11 years
Pema Gyalpo བཤེན་ཀྲུལ་པོ། 白玛 (班玛) 加布			
Not available	April 2011	N/AVL	8 years



D. Killed in protest or died in custody: 4 Cases

Issue	Age at arrest	Date of arrest	Charge: sentence	Date of death
Babo དབའ་པོ། 瓦宝 (娃保)				
Mining	47	N/AVL	Unknown	Killed in protest on 16 August 2010
Ngawang Jampel (Ngawang Jamyang) ངག་དབང་འཇམ་འཕེལ། (ངག་དབང་འཇམ་བྱངས།) 阿旺(尼旺) 降边 (江白)/嘉央 (加央, 将央)				
Mining	45	23 November 2013	N/AVL	Between 23 November and 13 December.
Kunchok Jinpa ཀུན་མཚོག་སྤྱན་པ། 金巴				
Mining	43	8 November 2013	Leaking state secrets: 21 years	6 February 2021
Kunchok Drakpa དཀོན་མཚོག་གྲགས་པ། 关曲(贡觉) 扎巴				
Mining	Mid forties	Early December 2013	Suspected to have participated in mining protests	Late December 2013



Source: TCHRD



Source: HRW



E. Whereabouts unknown: 20 Cases

Issue	Age at arrest	Date of arrest	Charge	Length of sentence
Tsultrim Nyendak ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་སྤྱན་གྲགས། 次成 (次真)念扎				
Mining	N/AVL	23 November 2013	N/AVL	N/AVL
Karma ཀམ། 嘎玛				
Mining	N/AVL	Late February 2018	Engaging in "separatist activity"	N/AVL
Khenrab མཁྱེན་རབས། 青热 (钦热, 庆惹)				
Mining	36	Late February 2018	Engaging in "separatist activity"	N/AVL
Rinchen Namdol རིན་ཚེན་ལྷམ་གྲོལ། 仁钦 (仁青) 南卓 (昂卓)				
Mining	39	Late February 2018	Engaging in "separatist activity"	N/AVL



Source: TCHRD



Source: TCHRD

Issue	Age at arrest	Date of arrest	Charge	Length of sentence
Tsultrim Gonpo རྒྱལ་ཁྲིམས་མགོན་པོ། 次成(次真)贡布(贡保, 干布)				
Mining	50s	Late February 2018	Engaging in "separatist activity"	N/AVL
Rechung Rinpoche རི་རྩུང་རིན་པོ་ཆེ། 日琼仁波切				
Mining	72	Late February 2018	Engaging in "separatist activity"	N/AVL
Jangchup Ngodup རྩུང་རྩུབས་དངོས་གྲུབ། 降秋(向秋, 桑秋) 欧珠				
	60s	Late February 2018	Engaging in "separatist activity"	N/AVL
Sogru Abhu སློག་རུ་ཨ་བུ། 索如·阿布				
	39	Late February 2018	Engaging in "separatist activity"	N/AVL
Namsey རྣམ་སྲས། 朗色				
Mining	39	Late February 2018	Engaging in "separatist activity"	N/AVL
Gendun Soepa དགེ་འདུན་བཟོན་པ། 根敦(格登, 更敦) 索巴				
Land appropriation for brick manufacturing industry	N/AVL	July 2018	Founding an "evil organization" to engage in "forced business transaction", "extortion and deceit" and "disturbing social order by mobilizing support from the public."	3-7 years
Choesang ཚོས་བཟང། 曲桑(秋桑, 曲松)				
Land appropriation for brick manufacturing industry	N/AVL	July 2018	N/AVL	3-7 years
Bhende Dorje བན་བདེ་དོ་རྗེ། 完德多杰(多吉)				
Land appropriation for brick manufacturing industry	N/AVL	July 2018	N/AVL	3-7 years
Tashi Tsering བཀའ་ཤིས་ཚེ་རིང། 扎西才让(次仁)				
Land appropriation for brick manufacturing industry	N/AVL	July 2018	N/AVL	3-7 years

Source: TCHRD



Source: TCHRD



Source: TCHRD



Source: TCHRD



	Issue	Age at arrest	Date of arrest	Charge	Length of sentence
	Sonam Gyal བསོད་ནམས་རྒྱལ། 索朗 (索娜, 索南) 加				
	Land appropriation for brick manufacturing industry	N/AVL	July 2018	N/AVL	3-7 years
	Dhargye དར་རྒྱལ། 达杰 (达吉)				
	Land appropriation for brick manufacturing industry	N/AVL	July 2018	N/AVL	3-7 years
	Shawo Tsering ཤ་བོ་ཚེ་རིང། 夏吾才让 (次仁)				
	Land appropriation for brick manufacturing industry	N/AVL	July 2018	N/AVL	3-7 years
	Khamjam Gyal ཁམ་ཇམ་རྒྱལ། 卡先加				
	Land appropriation for brick manufacturing industry	N/AVL	July 2018	N/AVL	3-7 years
	Dukbum Tsering ལྷུག་འབྲུམ་ཚེ་རིང། 才让 (次仁)				
	Land appropriation for brick manufacturing industry	N/AVL	July 2018	N/AVL	3-7 years
	Wang Ché དབང་ཚེ། 旺切				
	Land appropriation, industry not known	N/AVL	2019	“creating hurdles for the government policy, not accepting environmental conservation compensation, and stopping others from receiving it, and negatively influencing the regular working of the village and party committees”	N/AVL
	Zom Che འཛོམས་ཚེ། 宗切				
	Land appropriation, industry not known	N/AVL	2019		N/AVL



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