Is feeding pigeons all the help the Convention can offer to environmental activists?

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1. Persecution and harassment of environmental activists is “regular” in EECCA countries.
   - Feeding pigeons/battery plant case in Belarus.
   - The special procedure, even when available (such as in Belarus case), cannot address some of the most brutal and dangerous violations.

2. Persecution and harassment is not “non-EU” problem.
   - The most recent case study report by Justice and Environment revealed 13 cases of environmental defenders harassment in the EU countries (2018):
     “10 out of the 13 involved direct action” making it the most common form of retribution. Out of those 10, 5 were committed solely by authorities i.e. State actors. This is a troubling statistic as it means that many of the authorities are likely abusing their powers, possibly for profit, rather than protecting the defenders.”

3. Quick Response Mechanism
   - A clear human rights element of the Convention
   - Aarhus-specific and based on Article 3.8
   - Does no need to be another committee or even body (Aarhus Mediator, Aarhus Ombudsman, etc)
   - Shall not overlap with compliance mechanism but may have links with it (would also decrease workload for CC)
   - Has its own (complementing) niche vis a vis existing HR procedures, but based on HR special procedures
   - Should provide help in “urgent” cases and play a preventive nature
   - Intendent, impartial, supported by the Secretariat

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2 It includes (a) harassment by non-state actors (direct; cyber; judicial [criminal charges, civil lawsuits, administrative proceedings], criminalisation, penalisation, imprisonment as a result); Violence; Killing and (b) by state actors: Excessive Use of Force; Arrest and Detention; Judicial Harassment.