



EnviCrimeNet
European Network for Environmental Crime



Who:

- Environmental crime investigation services / competent authorities in Europe (33 jurisdictions)

What:

- Developing a vibrant network of experts enhancing effectiveness in the fight against (organised) environmental crime

How:

- Exchange of information and experiences related to exchanging best practices in dealing with environmental crime

Based on:

- EU Council Resolution 10291/11 d.d. 09-10 June 2011



Topics of the annual meeting October 2015 Milan

- wildlife-related crimes,
- focus on illegal waste trade,
- criminal behavior in relation to safety and industrial plants,
- illegal logging.
- The IPEC results.



Statement:

While it is often believed that poaching and illegal hunting is primarily a problem in African or Asian countries, the illegal hunting, trafficking and breeding of wolves is a problem for many European countries.

Other concerns in Europe are the illegal logging and timber trade, as well as the health and safety / dangers posed by the illegal textile waste trade.

In particular, the huge illicit profits gained through logging and textile waste trade require increased focus from law enforcement as well as more public awareness

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Outline:

- Observations
- Environmental Crime
- Responsibilities on national level in the member states
- Environmental Crime in Europe: The IPEC report
- Problems on EU level
- Where to start?
- Recommendations

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Observations;

Great differences:

- Legal structures, laws, instructions etc
- definitions used
- authorities, law enforcement, criminal investigations, agencies, police
- legal powers
- enforcement strategies / guidelines; (civil, administrative and criminal methods)

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Environmental Crime: victimless?

Humans:

- 21,000 people dying in the Netherlands every year (WHO)
- poisoned citizens, diseases; reduced life expectancy

The environment:

- water, air, earth, soil, flora & Fauna, biodiversity, disrupting human environment, spreading of diseases

Society & systems:

- disrupting level playing field, economic balances, depleting economic system, creation of black markets, depleting law and order, threatening security of citizens; food chain, damaging the image of the EU.

But who is going to report?

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Responsibilities on national level in the member states

Steering on gathering of relevant information

- geographical scans on environmental issues
- national intelligence plan; what, how, who, when
- gather, improve and analyse

Develop and use enforcement strategies / guidelines;
(civil, administrative and criminal methods)

Choose and steer on investigations

- multidisciplinary: specialist
- shared priorities
- criminal investigation as optimum remedium

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Environmental Crime in Europe:

The IPEC report: Intelligence Project Environmental Crime
EnviCrimeNet and Europol

European scan environmental crime to identify:

- Types
- Extend
- Threats
- Recommendations



Organized Crime Groups involvement

Reported for cases:

- Illegal trade in endangered species /related products also on the Internet;
- Illegal collection, (cross-border) transport and storage including dumping of (hazardous and electronic) waste and recycling;
- Illegal shipping of (hazardous and electronic) waste;
- Illegal logging;
- Illegal hunting/poaching;
- Trade in counterfeit pesticides;
- Illegal activities in relation to fuel oil;
- Illegal fishing activities;
- Forest fires.



IPEC conclusions (1)

- Environmental crime: broad area of criminality
- Primarily undertaken to gain (illicit) profits
- Statistics are not productive
- Number of registered crime correlates with number of controls
- Only efficient controls can uncover criminal cases
- No investigations if management authority's work is inhibited or inefficient, or the interface for transferring cases to law enforcement is ineffective - This is the case in most of Europe and that is why it is impossible to make an analysis.

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IPEC conclusions (2)

- Many criminal cases are dismissed and only a few result in a sentence
- Limited financial and human resources
- Lack of national, international and inter-departmental cooperation
- Environmental crimes are on the rise
- Attractive to organised crime structures and networks
- High profit, low detection risk and low or no sanction at all
- Most attractive areas are: waste, endangered species and dangerous chemicals/pesticides

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Problems on EU level: the methodology of the SOCTA-Europol

The commission followed the COSI and LEWP advises based on:
The SOCTA (serious organized crime threat assessment)
Wildlife and waste are only “emerging threats”
So why should the EU invest on environmental problems?

SOCTA:

- Shit in is shit out
- If you don't look, you won't see it
- if you don't ask they won't report

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Where to start On EU level?

Building up a case for priority in the EU and actual law enforcement

- Collecting data, gathering, breeding and analyse information
- coordinating, informing sharing operational information
- sharing & exchanging priorities and intelligence agenda's
- Connecting the chain
- connecting the network of IMPEL, EnviCrimeNet, ENPE and EUFJE

- FOCAL POINT Environmental Crime EUROPOL (now only 1 fte)

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Recommendations (1):

- Focal Point Environmental Crime at EUROPOL
- Central unit/agencies (multi-agency or NEST)
- use of intelligence agenda's / plans / prioritise
- Achieve cooperation also with management agencies
- Specialism: educate and train staff (civil, administrative, enforcement, prosecutors, judges)
- Target the profit: follow the money and take it back
- Revision of Directive(s) / instructions (Netherlands more than 500 laws, regulations)

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Recommendations (2):

- Uniform definition in regulations (environmental crime, fraud, money laundering, counterfeit, murder)
- Environmental Crime = organized Crime Legal powers, (wire tapping, telecom)
- Intelligence-led surveillance and law enforcement
- Multidisciplinair Inspections
- Initiate projects like Cobra (Cites) and Silver Ax (Insecticides)
- Obligate to share information (Administrative rules/legislation permits/licenses, administrative offenses)
- Obligate to Inform prosecutor / police / environmental criminal agencies