

Environmental Crime

Actions taken by
**EU JUSTICE
AND HOME AFFAIRS**
(JHA) AGENCIES

FRONTX

 **FRA**
EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY
FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

 **EUROPOL**

 European Monitoring Centre
for Drugs and Drug Addiction



 **CEPOL**

 **EUROJUST**

 **EIGE**
European Institute
for Gender Equality

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The Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Agencies' Network



The **Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Agencies' Network** connects the EU Agencies that contribute to the area of freedom, security and justice. Together the JHA Agencies support the EU and its Member States in the implementation of the EU's objectives in the fields of migration, asylum and external border management, the fight against serious organised crime and terrorism, as well as in the promotion of gender equality and respect for fundamental rights. They also ensure the development and operation of EU large-scale IT systems, contribute to the EU monitoring activities on drugs and drug addiction, and provide law-enforcement training.

The JHA Agencies' Network includes nine agencies: the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Training ([CEPOL](#)), the European Asylum Support Office ([EASO](#)), the European Institute for Gender Equality ([EIGE](#)), the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug

Addiction ([EMCDDA](#)), the EU Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice ([eu-LISA](#)), the EU Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation ([Eurojust](#)), the EU's Law Enforcement Agency ([Europol](#)), the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights ([FRA](#)) and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency ([Frontex](#)).

In 2021, the JHA Agencies' Network, chaired by Frontex, focuses on the Agencies' support to the EU Green Deal ([link to Priorities](#)) - a strategic and ambitious plan launched by the European Commission to enhance green policies and the protection of the environment in the European Union.

This report presents the JHA community's key activities in the fight against environmental crime and contributions towards protecting the environment.



Follow this link to find out more on the *EU Green Deal*

The Challenge



Environmental crimes pose a serious, multidimensional challenge to the European Union and its citizens. The JHA community needs to address them. Often international by their nature, these crimes do not occur in isolation: they are carried out in connection with other criminal activities, such as forgery of documents, corruption and money laundering – all generating substantial illegal profits. However, environmental crimes are frequently considered secondary to the crimes they are interlinked with, and,

as a result, they are not always properly prioritised by the relevant authorities. The aim of the JHA community is to change this attitude.

Environmental crimes impact the natural environment, generating increasing levels of pollution, degradation of wildlife, and a reduction of biodiversity. They disturb the ecological balance, harm entire ecosystems and pose a threat to human health.

KEY EXAMPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL CRIMES



FISHERY CRIME

Crimes in the entire fisheries sector from harvest to processing, including food fraud at customer level



FORESTRY CRIME

Both illegal logging and illicit timber trade, criminal activities that destroy biodiversity and threaten the livelihood of those reliant on forest resources



ILLEGAL MINING

Both illegal extraction and trade in minerals, including illegal use of toxic chemicals (such as cyanide and mercury) in mining activities



POLLUTION CRIME

Various criminal activities such as waste crime, marine pollution, illicit trafficking in chemicals, carbon trading crime, and illegal mining



WILDLIFE CRIME

Criminal activities involved in exploiting wildlife across the globe, threatening protected wildlife species

THE IMPACT OF ILLICIT DRUGS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Being the cornerstone of organised crime, illicit drugs make an important and often underestimated contribution to climate change and environmental damage.

According to the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA):

DRUG PRODUCTION AND TRAFFICKING CAUSES ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE

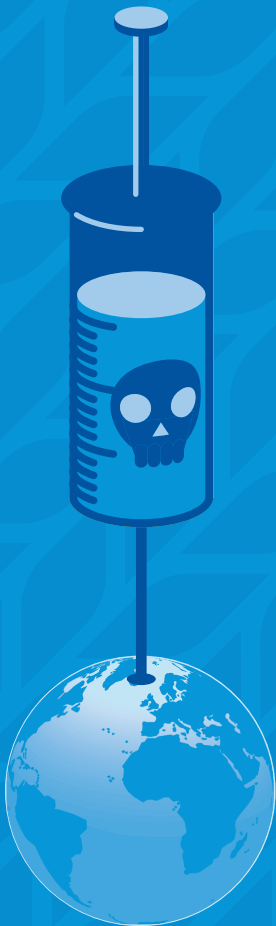
Research on the links between drugs and climate change indicates that the cultivation fuels deforestation contributing to increased levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Processing drug crops causes **contamination of the aquatic environment and soil**, leading to a loss of biodiversity, harming ecosystems. Further, the transportation of drugs to consumer markets via air, sea and land routes has an environmental impact that is not currently well understood, and more research is needed on this topic.

SYNTHETIC DRUG PRODUCTION GENERATES CHEMICAL WASTE

The production of synthetic drugs in the EU generates an estimated **11 000 tonnes of chemical waste each year**. The environmental impact of waste from synthetic drug production is still poorly understood, however, it is hazardous to health and the burden of costs on society are substantial.

DRUG PRODUCTION WASTES NATURAL RESOURCES

The production of illicit drugs consumes considerable amounts of energy and attempts to quantify this have been made. For example, researchers have estimated the carbon footprint for the production of one kilogram of dried cannabis grown indoors to be equivalent to **4.6 tonnes of carbon dioxide**.



Follow this link to find out more on environmental harm related to drugs:

2019 EU Drug Markets Report



Follow this link to find out more on the costs of cleaning up synthetic drug production sites:

An analysis of the costs of dismantling and cleaning up synthetic drug production sites in Belgium and the Netherlands

From strategic analysis to coordinated actions



The disruption of cross-border criminal networks is a key priority for the European Union.

As cross-border crimes span across countries and jurisdictions, close cooperation between countries in Europe and beyond, European agencies, as well as international organisations is crucial. The JHA Agencies play an important role in supporting operational cooperation focusing on priorities agreed at EU level within the EU Policy Cycle for Serious and Organised Crime. The priorities of the EU Policy Cycle are being addressed through the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT), led by Member States, with various activities and operations in which JHA Agencies take part.

The Council of the EU included environmental crime as one of the crime priorities in EMPACT 2018-2021, specifically mentioning illicit waste trafficking and wildlife crime.

Consequently, in the framework of EMPACT 2018-2021, Europol established its Analysis Project (AP) EnviCrime. It plays a significant role in coordinating the fight against environmental crime within and beyond the European Union. The AP EnviCrime supports national law enforcement agencies in their criminal investigations, following a multidisciplinary and multi-agency

approach and complementing respective EM-

PACT activities. The AP EnviCrime improves the operational cooperation through effective information and intelligence flow, brings its expertise and advice and presents the overall crime picture according to intelligence-led findings at **Europol**. A comprehensive threat assessment on Environmental crime is to be released by the end of 2021.

The European Union Serious and Organised Threat Assessment (EU SOCTA) Report for 2021 prepared by Europol, that laid down the basis for the EMPACT 2022+ for the next four-years, addresses the link between waste trafficking, financial offences (such as tax evasion) and document fraud. The report also highlights that criminal groups involved in wildlife crimes are active on several continents. Therefore, the EMPACT 2022+ priorities for 2022-2025 designate again environmental crime as one of the priorities, particularly tasking the relevant authorities to combat criminal networks involved in all forms of environmental crime and in particular those with a capability to infiltrate legal business structures or set up own companies to facilitate their crimes.



Follow this link to find out more:
The EU SOCTA Report for 2021

AP ENVICRIME - EUROPOL, IN COORDINATION WITH FRONTEX, EUROJUST, OLAF, AND INTERPOL



STARTING DATE
November 2017



INVOLVED COUNTRIES
21 EU Member States + 10 third countries



TARGETED AREAS OF CRIME
3: Waste, Pollution, Wildlife



NUMBER OF CRIMINAL CASES
More than 800



NUMBER OF EMPACT OPERATIONAL ACTIONS
75



NUMBER OF OPERATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS VIA SIENA
(EUROPOL SECURE OPERATIONAL EXCHANGE SYSTEM)
9 600



NUMBER OF ANALYSIS PRODUCTS DISTRIBUTED TO INVOLVED
MEMBER STATES AND THIRD PARTIES IN 2020
200



Follow this link to find out more:
*The EU fight against organised
crime and EMPACT timeline*

* Statistics have been updated up
to the end of October 2021.

FIGHTING environmental crimes – multilateral operational response



In the last few years, **several successful operational activities fighting environmental crime have been conducted** by Europol and Frontex, involving many Member States, non-EU countries, and international organisations.

Operation 30 Days at Sea

Operation 30 Days at Sea is a global operation coordinated by INTERPOL and its Pollution Crime Working Group (PCWG) in partnership with Europol and Frontex as part of the EMPACT action plan on environmental crime since 2018. Other EU agencies, such as the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) are also involved.

Operation 30 Days at Sea 3.0 aimed at enhancing the global law enforcement response to crimes that lead to maritime pollution. It revealed maritime pollution incidents as well as other crimes related to pollution and waste trafficking at sea, including a new focus on COVID-19-related waste in 2020.

Operation 30 Days at Sea 3.0 had three primary operational targets:

- 1. Pollution from vessels and offshore installations**
- 2. Land-Based and river pollution impacting the marine environment**
- 3. Waste trafficking through ports**

Each of the three targets included a comprehensive list of sub-targets. Due to the proliferation of medical

waste associated with the pandemic, INTERPOL included the illegal disposal and trafficking of medical waste as a sub-target.

The operation was conducted in two key phases:

1. Intelligence phase

(1 October 2020 – 28 February 2021)

During the intelligence phase of the operation, participating countries focused on gathering, sharing, and analysing information on criminal offences that lead to marine pollution to develop targets for the tactical phase.

2. Tactical phase

(1-31 March 2021)

The tactical phase consisted of intelligence-led, random, and routine inspections and enforcement actions to detect and disrupt criminal activities that lead to marine pollution and waste trafficking

OPERATIONS 30 DAYS AT SEA 3.0 (2020)

coordinated by INTERPOL, in cooperation with Europol and Frontex



PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES
67 from every continent



NUMBER OF INSPECTIONS
34 000



INVOLVED AGENCIES
300



MARINE POLLUTION OFFENSES
1 600

Follow these links to find out more on Operation 30 days at Sea:

2018



Interpol press release



Europol press release



The INTERPOL Final Report on Operation 30 days at Sea (2018)

2019



Interpol press release



Europol press release



Frontex press release



The INTERPOL Key Findings Report on Operation 30 Days at Sea 2.0 (2019)

2020



Interpol press release



Frontex press release



The INTERPOL Press release on Operation 30 Days at Sea 3.0 (2020)

Operation Retrovirus

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Europol foresaw a global problem with illegal sanitary waste processing and disposal. As a response, **Operation Retrovirus was launched in coordination with EnviCrimeNet**, an informal network connecting police officers and other crime fighters. The aim of this action, initiated in March 2020 and concluded in November 2020, was the early detection of illegal collection, management, transportation and disposal of sanitary waste. Most of the infringements in this domain are committed by criminals to make profit and circumvent time-consuming regulations.



Follow this link to find out more on *Operation Retrovirus* on Europol's website

Europol created the concept, coordinated, and supported the operation by providing analytical and operational support and coordination, while also facilitating a secure instant communication exchange between the participating authorities. Moreover, Europol supported investigators with the extraction of encrypted data from mobile devices and operational analysis in real-time during action days.

Frontex contributed to Operation Retrovirus by providing a situational assessment (cross-border crime scenario) and comprehensive training on detection of sanitary waste and medical devices. Frontex also provided tests and sanitary products to staff deployed in border crossing points, particularly customs and police authorities of Member States, and promoted the use of the EUROSUR Fusion Services.

OPERATION RETROVIRUS (2020)

coordinated by Europol, with the participation of the European Commission DG Environment, EnviCrimeNet, the European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law (IMPEL), Frontex, Interpol and El PacCTO



PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES
30, EU and non-EU



NUMBER OF INSPECTIONS
280 000



NUMBER OF ARRESTS
102



NUMBER OF INFRINGEMENTS
819



SEIZURE
**22 consignments of waste
and 800 000 € worth of assets**

Multipurpose Maritime Operations (MMO) in the Black Sea

The MMO in the Black Sea, led by Frontex and conducted in coordination with the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA), the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and six Bulgarian and Romanian national authorities aimed at preventing, detecting and combating illegal immigration, illegal fishing activities, marine pollution and other cross-border crimes.

The third edition of MMO was organised in the Black Sea from 31 March 2021 to 6 October 2021. By September 14, 2021, a total of 152 containers with illicit waste from numerous countries have been discovered in Constanta and Burgas. Additionally, participants detected eight cases of potential marine pollution and reported them to EMSA. Seven of these cases were related to possible oil pollution and one to illegal waste dumping at sea.



Follow this link to watch the video on You tube.

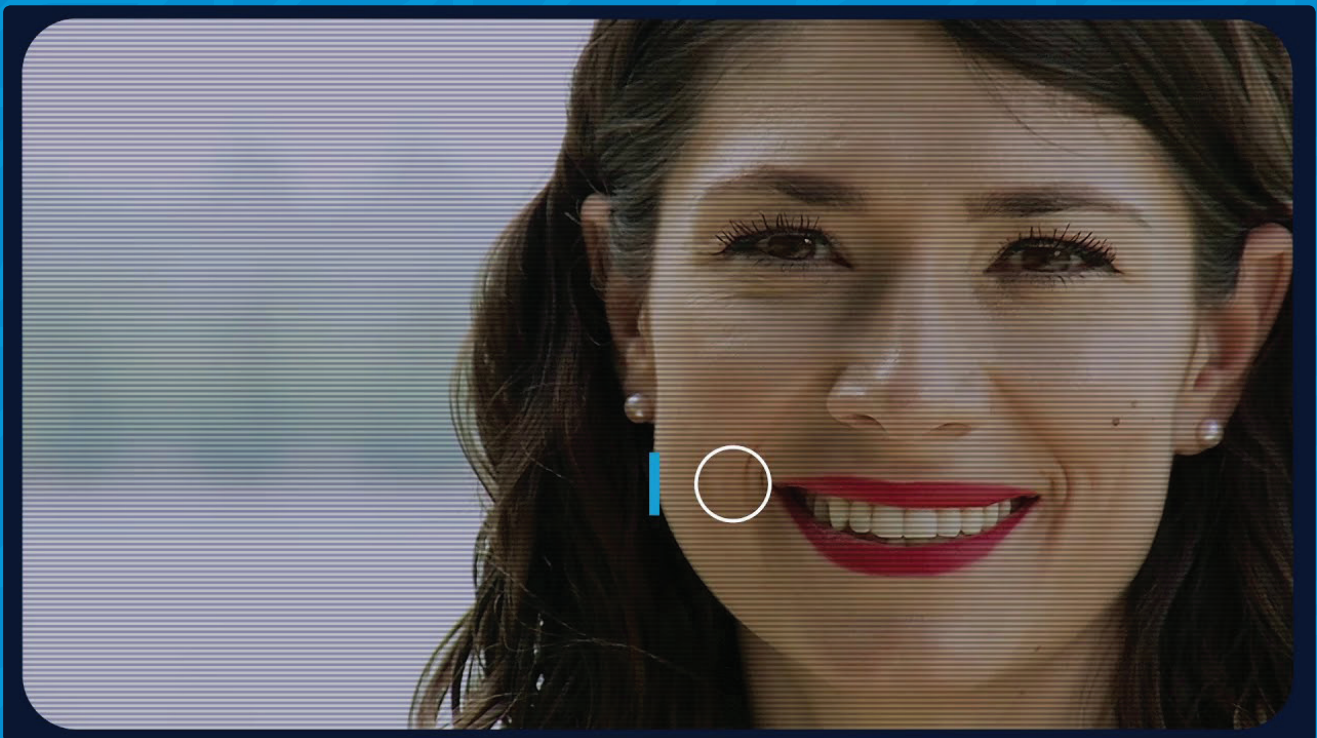
Operations Pontus and Pontus II

Frontex and Europol supported and contributed to Operation Pontus (September 2019) and Pontus II (May 2021), EMPACT activities, which were coordinated by EFCA. These operations aimed at facilitating and further strengthening cooperation between law enforcement and fisheries control authorities at both national and EU levels leading to more coherent action against illegal fishing.

These operations are good examples of operational cooperation against environmental crime that goes beyond the JHA community.



Follow this link to find out more on the *operational coordination by EFCA*.



PREVENTING and DETECTING environmental crimes with real-time surveillance

EUROSUR is an integrated framework for the exchange of information and for operational cooperation within the European Border and Coast Guard. It has been introduced to improve situational awareness and to increase reaction capability for the purposes of border management, including the detection, prevention and combating of illegal immigration and cross-border crime and contributing to ensuring the protection and saving the lives of migrants.

Under the EUROSUR framework, **Frontex is the agency responsible for coordinating the EURO-SUR Fusion Services (EFS)**. The agency delivers the requested services as listed in the EFS Service Catalogue to Member States and provides the necessary training and awareness. These services provided are based on the latest technology and include space – and airborne capabilities among others that might be used to detect various criminal activities or oil spills at sea. EFS support and enhance the European situational picture at the external borders and in the pre-frontier areas, covering air, land and sea domains.

EUROSUR - INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK FOR THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND FOR OPERATIONAL COOPERATION

Coordinated by Europol, with the participation of the European Commission DG Environment, EnviCrimeNet, the European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law (IMPEL), Frontex, Interpol and El PacCTO.



Marine

Monitoring and tracking of vessels of interest to fight crimes at sea, supported by vessel tracking systems and synthetic aperture radar satellites able to detect objects on the sea



Air

Multipurpose aerial real-time surveillance fighting cross-border crime, including illegal fisheries



Land

Satellite imagery of border zones, pre-frontier and coastal areas of non-EU-countries, to support analysts in tackling cross-border criminality, strategic and operational intelligence.

SUPPORTING prosecution of environmental crime



The **mission of Eurojust is to support** and strengthen both the coordination and cooperation between the investigating and prosecuting authorities of Member States in serious cross-border and organised crime-related cases. Eurojust contributes to EMPACT Environmental Crime by providing support at the judicial level to cross-border operational activities and to training and capacity building of prosecutors and magistrates specialising in environmental crime.

The JIT 'Chicken run' case is a good example to illustrate Eurojust's legal and operational support provided to competent national authorities in relation to the investigation and prosecution of environmental crime, including financial investigation and recovery of illegal assets.

EUROJUST'S COORDINATION EFFORT

Coordinated by Europol, with the participation of the European Commission DG Environment, EnviCrimeNet, the European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law (IMPEL), Frontex, Interpol and El PacCTO.



In 2019, Eurojust supported:

39 cross-border environmental crime cases

(12 newly opened in 2019, 27 ongoing from the previous years)



6 Joint Investigation Teams (JITs) concerning environmental crime

(2 newly established in 2019, 4 ongoing from previous years)



11 case-specific coordination meetings on environmental crime investigations and prosecutions and **1 coordinated action day**.

IMPROVING the EU law on environmental crime



The review of the Environmental Crime Directive

As described in the EU Strategy to Tackle Organised Crime 2021-2025, environmental crime requires specific attention. This is why the current EU legislative framework to fight environmental crime, namely the Directive 2008/99/EC on the protection of the environment through criminal law (also called the Environmental Crime Directive), is under revision to become more effective.

The review seeks to improve the implementation of the Directive by broadening and defining its scope more clearly. Its aim is also to improve the availability of a broader range of appropriate sanction types and levels, to step up cooperation within and between Member States, to foster statistical data collection on environmental crime proceedings and to strengthen the effective operation of the enforcement chain (detection, investigation, prosecution, adjudication).



In 2020, Eurojust supported:

51 cross-border environmental crime cases

(20 newly opened in 2020, 31 ongoing from the previous years)



6 JITs concerning environmental crime

(3 newly established in 2020, 3 ongoing from previous years)



6 case-specific coordination meetings on environmental crime investigations and prosecutions.

JIT 'Chicken run': #JusticeDone for large-scale contamination of eggs with fipronil



During a joint action day supported by a coordination centre at Eurojust, coordinated searches and arrests were executed. The Dutch-Belgian JIT continued to work together during the prosecutorial phase and included a financial investigation that led to the tracing and seizure of assets.



Six coordination meetings took place at Eurojust to agree on the common investigation and prosecution strategy and to exchange evidence. Eurojust provided a formal legal opinion on a possible *ne bis in idem* issue in the Belgian and Italian criminal proceedings. With the support of Eurojust, cross-border cooperation took place with Germany, Romania and Italy.

The National Desks at Eurojust opened linked cases to provide operational and legal assistance, including the creation and funding of a JIT between the Belgian and Dutch authorities, with the involvement of Eurojust and Europol.



2017: Following the discovery of large quantities of chicken eggs and egg products contaminated with the insecticide fipronil, parallel criminal investigations were initiated in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Italy.



Follow this link to find out more on the *Report on Eurojust's Casework on Environmental Crime*

The European Commission has assessed different options to improve the Directive. From February to May 2021, the Commission held a public consultation and received approximately 500 replies from European citizens. The Commission has also broadly consulted law enforcement practitioners specialised in environmental crime and their networks (such as IMPEL, EnviCrimeNet, ENPE and EUFJE), Europol, Eurojust, environmental NGOs and concerned businesses. Part of these consultations took place in the framework of the Environmental Compliance and Governance Forum. It was established in 2018 as a formal Commission Expert Group to steer the implementation of the [Action Plan on Environmental Compliance and Governance](#) and is performing, inter alia, also work related to combating environmental crime. The Forum endorsed on 2 June a Guidance on combating environmental crime. Europol, Eurojust and the mentioned networks are members of the Forum.

A proposal for a revised Directive is scheduled for December 2021.



Follow this link to find out more on *The Environmental Crime Directive*



Follow this link to find out more on *The current evaluation process of the Directive*



Follow this link to find out more on *The public consultation and the Inception Impact Assessment*.

Input of JHA Agencies to the European Union's legislative developments

By virtue of its mandate, Eurojust has a unique opportunity to build up an institutional knowledge of reoccurring legal and practical issues and solutions that can improve the effectiveness of the international judicial cooperation in environmental crime cases. This knowledge can help EU stakeholders to develop further the Union's environmental legal and policy framework.

In early 2021, Eurojust provided a written input, upon request by the European Commission DG Justice, to the ongoing revision of the Environmental Crime Directive. The input was based on the findings of the quantitative and qualitative analysis of Eurojust's experience in dealing with cross-border environmental crime cases and on the recommendations set out in the Report on Eurojust's Casework on Environmental Crime issued in January 2021.

The report summarises the experiences encountered in the nearly 60 cross-border environmental criminal cases referred to Eurojust during the five-year period from 2014 to 2018. It highlights best practices to help national authorities overcome legal and operational challenges, develop judicial cooperation and coordination within the European Union and with non-EU countries, ensure efficiency during investigations and achieve successful prosecutions.

As far as the review of the Environmental Crime Directive is concerned, Europol participated in the assessment process of the existing text (dating back to 2008) since 2016 and contributed to the drafting process with several inputs at expert level.

EU Member States' mutual evaluations on environmental crime and cross-border cooperation

In 1997, the EU established a mechanism for evaluating the application and implementation of international activities in the fight against organised crime at national level.

The eighth round of mutual evaluation (2017-2019) was devoted to the practical implementation of European policies on preventing and combating environmental crime. It assessed whether Member States defined relevant priorities and undertook coordinated actions.

Eurojust consistently contributed to the evaluation process by providing the evaluation teams with Member State-specific written inputs based on its environmental crime casework statistics and experience.

In late 2019, the final report of the eighth round of mutual evaluations by Member States was submitted to the JHA Council. One of the recommendations of the final report specifically highlights the role of the JHA agencies in supporting Member States in the fight against environmental crime, as follows:

- Member States are encouraged to participate actively in work carried out at EU and international levels to enhance cooperation in tackling environmental crime, including waste-related crime, in particular in the activities of EU agencies and bodies — Eurojust, Europol and European Judicial Network — and of the European networks active in this area.



Follow this link to read the full report
"The practical implementation and operation of the European polices on preventing and combating Environmental Crime"

PROVIDING comprehensive training



CEPOL, the JHA Agency for law enforcement training, in cooperation with Member States' law enforcement authorities, training institutions, EU agencies (including Europol and Eurojust) implements a comprehensive training portfolio on environmental crime. It contains onsite training activities, online courses, webinars and one to one learning-oriented exchanges of operationally active officers.

All training activities are designed to address actual operational challenges, especially related to waste and wildlife crime. Online training solutions are particularly popular during the pandemic and make it possible to exchange good operational practice and knowledge between the Member States' law enforcement agencies ensuring better and more efficient response. In the training activities, special focus is paid to emerging crime patterns, the use of financial investigative methods, new intelligence, digital investigative, modern criminal analysis techniques and cooperation with the society and industry. Concrete impact of the residential training activities is measured 5-12 months after the training. The outcomes of the post-course evaluation mechanism confirm the practical applicability of environmental crime-related training activities.

In 2020, CEPOL conducted a series of webinars for 632 active EU law enforcement officers in cooperation with Ireland, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and Europol on digital elements of wildlife crime. The training focused on online investigations, cyber patrolling, darknet, financial investigation and asset recovery in virtual currencies emphasising the new virtual world side of wildlife protection which becomes more and more relevant every day.

Eurojust supports training activities addressed to prosecutors, magistrates and investigative judges and focused on matters related to cross-border judicial cooperation, including in environmental crime cases. Europol provided support for these training activities.

In the frame of EMPACT Environmental Crime 2020 and 2021, **Eurojust takes part in an operational action led by France** (the French National School of Magistrates) aimed at organising a series of trainings for prosecutors, magistrates and investigative judges from various Member States on matters related to environmental crime. Eurojust, with the participation of Europol, delivered training sessions in December 2020, March 2021, and June 2021.

In May 2021, Eurojust, with the participation of Europol, gave a training session within the online webinar organised by the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN) on the topic "Judicial cooperation in criminal matters: cross-border environmental crimes".

In June 2021, upon a request by the International Association of Prosecutors (IAP), Eurojust provided an online webinar on cross border cooperation in environmental crime cases to the members of IAP from various Member States and non-EU countries.

In 2020, Frontex arranged an awareness programme to staff deployed at the EU external borders. as part of Operation RETROVIRUS to prevent, detect and fight illicit trafficking of sanitary waste deriving from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, in July 2021 Frontex delivered a comprehensive online training on environmental crime to the standing corps.

Numerous events organised by Frontex during its JHAAN Presidency also contributed to sharing knowledge and discussing environmental issues. The agency organised online seminars on the impact of climate on JHA and on environmental crime.



Follow this link to find out more about
Jaguar Network



Follow this link to find out more on
4-Networks Day Joint Statement



Follow this link to find out more on
the Environmental Compliance and Governance Forum

Connecting experts

Environmental enforcement is a multidisciplinary area that combines both criminal and administrative laws and involves a wide range of authorities. Common understanding, contacts and exchange of best practice among practitioners are crucial. In this respect, four European networks can be mentioned as good examples of cooperation and networking:

- Network of environmental inspectors and regulators (IMPEL)
- Network of environmental law enforcement officers (EnviCrimeNet), an informal law enforcement network which aims at incentivizing strategic and operational activities in the EU and with third countries
- Network of environmental prosecutors (ENPE)
- Network of judges dealing with environmental crime cases (EUFJE).

There are also other examples of networking initiatives that go beyond the EU borders, such as the JAGUAR network which comprises police officers specialised in environmental crime from a number of countries in the EU and Latin America. The JAGUAR network was created within the framework of the technical support that Latin American countries are provided with by the European Union's EL PAcCTO Programme.

The JHA Agencies cooperate with these networks and support them. Europol hosts the EnviCrimeNet Secretariat. Eurojust's key partner, among the professional networks, is ENPE. In October 2019, Eurojust welcomed at its headquarters representatives of all these networks during a two-day conference,

organised jointly by ENPE and Eurojust, which was devoted to International collaboration and cooperation in the fight against environmental crime. As another example, in May 2021, Eurojust contributed to the final conference of the Waste Force Project, led by IMPEL, by taking part in the panel discussions and by delivering a keynote speech at the closure of the conference.

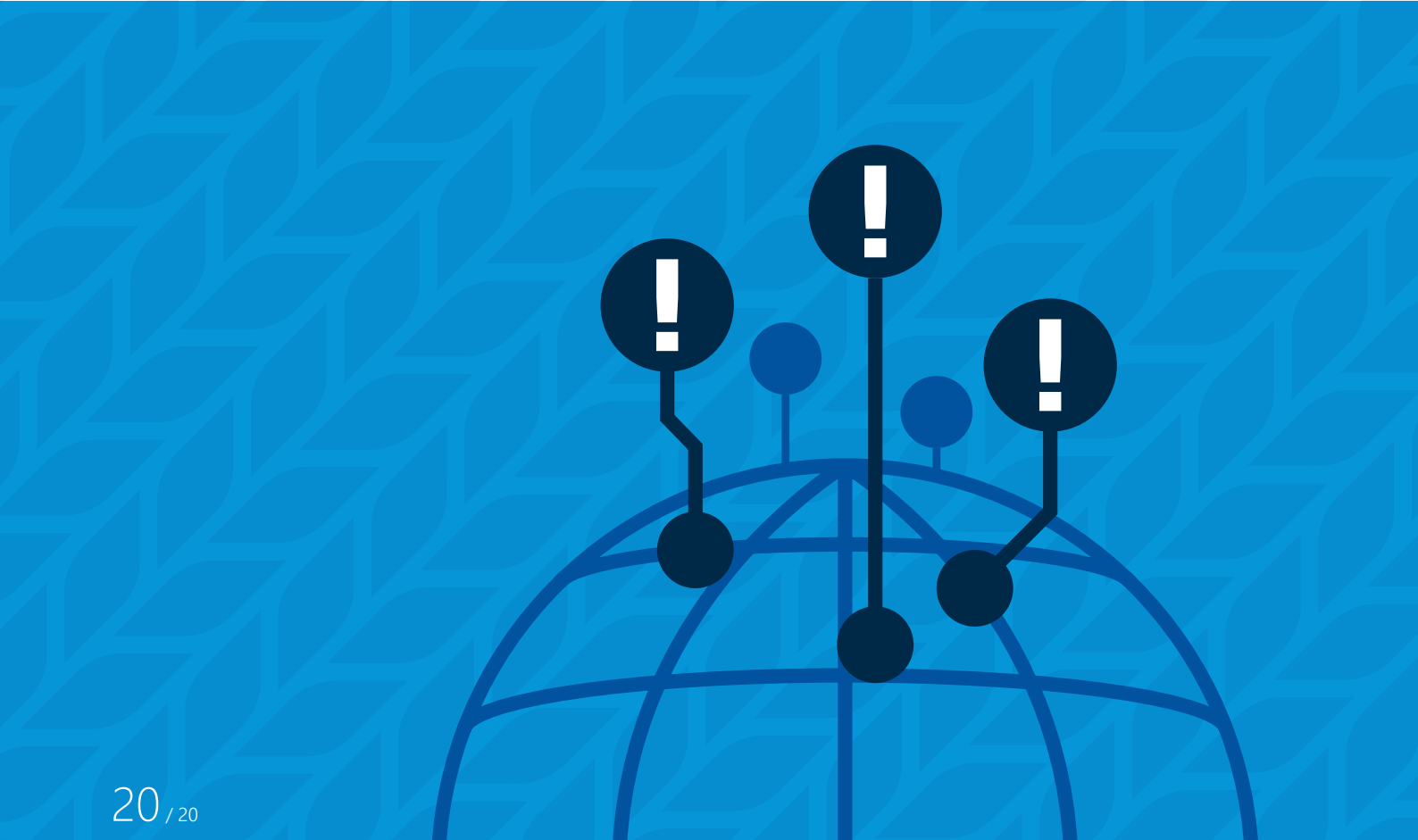
Furthermore, Eurojust is a participant of the Environmental Compliance and Governance Forum established by the European Commission. Eurojust contributes to the discussions of this forum of experts and brings there the perspective of judicial practitioners. Based on the experience in facilitating cross-border coordination and cooperation in relation to environmental crime investigations and prosecutions, Eurojust provided input to the draft guidance on combating environmental crime and related infringements produced under Action 4 of the Commission's Action Plan on Environmental Compliance and Governance.

A virtual **"4-Networks Day"** took place on 21 May 2021. It was titled "Together in the fight against environmental crime" and brought together more than 150 judges, prosecutors, environmental enforcement authorities, police officers and experts of the European Commission and JHA Agencies. This year's discussions focused on the revision of the Directive 2008/99/EC on environmental crime and the next EU multi-annual Policy Cycle to tackle Organised and Serious International Crime (2022-2025).

Conclusion



The JHA community is increasingly engaged in the fight against environmental crime. The agencies contribute to a safer and cleaner environment by undertaking various activities ranging from analysis to operational actions, within limits of their respective mandates. They also support legislative and policy-making processes, training and cooperation between different actors. The community recognises the seriousness of environmental crime, its harmful impact on nature and the threat it poses to human health and life. JHA agencies confirm their commitment to protect the environment together and hope that this is just the start of their joint activities in this field.



FRONTX

 EUROPEAN BORDER AND
COAST GUARD AGENCY

European Border and Coast Guard Agency
Plac Europejski 6, 00-124 Warsaw, Poland

T +48 22 205 95 00

F +48 22 205 95 01

frontex@frontex.europa.eu

www.frontex.europa.eu

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