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FOREIGN EXPERIENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME PREVENTION

Environmental crime is a growing threat to the environment, biodiversity and public health but also to international security. It contributes to tensions in societies and is often linked to other types of crime that it fuels (criminal or terrorist financing, corruption and money laundering, murders).

In conflict zones, armed criminal organizations and terrorists are increasingly involved in these types of trafficking, as highlighted in INTERPOL's recent reports (according to the 2018 World Atlas of Illicit Flows report, 38% of illicit resources of these groups are linked to such activities).

All countries in the world are affected, including countries of origin, transit and destination. Yet, environmental crime is still not very present in national legislation. Moreover, law enforcement officers rarely have got specific training. That is why police cooperation and legislation harmonization mechanisms have been introduced to identify and punish environmental criminals more effectively. The expression "environmental crime" means all the illegal activities that harm the environment and benefit certain individuals, groups and/or companies.

Although legal definitions vary according to the countries, five categories of environmental crime have been identified and are recognized by the United Nations Environment Assembly:

- illegal trade in wildlife,
- illegal logging,
- illegal fishing,
- dumping and illegal trade of dangerous and toxic substances and waste,
- mining and illegal trade of minerals.

OCLAESP is a leading organization in international cooperation and the French point of contact with Europol, Interpol and third countries. It

helps to improve international and national systems for developing standards and best practices. Since January 2018, it has ensured the leadership of the European platform EMPACT devoted to fighting environmental crime within Europol and on behalf of France. [1]

"Crime prevention" refers to the "efforts to prevent crime or criminal offending in the first instance – before the act has been committed". Most commentators agree on classifying crime prevention approaches into five categories: (1) "deterrence through law enforcement and adjudication", which relies on "the threat of apprehension, prosecution, and punishment"; (2) welfare crime prevention, which "seeks to address underlying social problems associated with crime, such as lack of job opportunities"; (3) developmental crime prevention that "postulates that criminal offending in adolescence and adulthood is influenced by 'behavioral and attitudinal patterns that have been learned during an individual's development'; (4) community crime prevention, which builds on "the community capacity to address crime and crime-related problems" and (5) environmental-situational crime prevention, which "seeks to reduce criminal opportunities through target hardening, surveillance, and environmental management" [2].

Green criminology has focused mainly on suggesting the application of environmental-situational crime prevention strategies. For instance, proposes the use of computer modeling to predict the behaviors of poachers and wildlife with the aim of being able to modify a scene in order to disrupt poacher activity. The related field of conservation criminology proposes relying on "natural resource management, and risk and decision sciences" to prevent environmental crimes. Green criminologists, however, have devoted far less attention to the cultural aspects of developmental and community-based crime and harm prevention approaches that could be drawn from the narratives of members of communities whose lives and experiences are entwined with nature [3].

Crimes that affect the environment are among the most profitable crimes with manifold negative impacts. Addressing such crimes is an integral element to achieving Agenda 2030 and addressing the biodiversity and climate crises.

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