

Session 1

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**“Strengthening good environmental governance and international cooperation” :
The case for preventing and fighting
Environmental Crime in the OSCE Region.**

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Criminal Threats

Environmental crime and security

- **Environmental crime covers all activities that cause significant harm or risk to the environment, human health, or both.**
- **It can be for criminals as profitable as illegal drug trafficking – but the sanctions are much lower, and it is harder to detect.** These factors make it highly attractive for organised crime groups. Almost 50% of criminal activities in **conflict zones** relate to environmental crime and illegal exploitation of natural resources. Proceeds from these activities are sometimes used to finance terrorism.
- **Transnational in its character, environmental crime is often linked to other serious organised crime networks** (narcotic drugs, trafficking in human beings and arms) and corruption;
- According to a joint UNEP/INTERPOL report in 2018, its **the 3rd most lucrative transnational criminal activity today**, after narcotic drugs trafficking and counterfeit. It generates up to **281 billion USD worldwide**. 5 to 7% increase in earnings every year
- **Wide range of illegal activities ;**
 - Illegal trade in **wildlife**
 - Illegal **timber** exploitation;
 - Illegal **fisheries**
 - Illegal dumping and trade of **waste, hazardous and toxic substances**
 - Illegal trade and exploitation of **mineral resources**

Far-reaching impacts of Environmental crime

- **Countries of origin, transit or destination are all concerned by negative impacts worldwide, including in our OSCE region.**
- Environmental crime is defined by its **impact on the natural environment**. This impact appears with :
 - increasing levels of pollution
 - a degradation of wildlife
 - a reduction in biodiversity
 - the disturbance of ecological balance.
- **Environmental crimes are not victimless**. The damage they cause to ecosystems and the environment poses :
 - the risk of disease
 - environmental disaster
 - irreversible climate change
 - the contamination of the food chain
 - reduced life expectancy
 - the death of human beings.
- Therefore, **Environmental crime & our common Security and Stability are clearly linked.**

Relevance to OSCE comprehensive security approach



- **Environment & our Security and Stability concerns are linked**
- Holistic approach of security by the OSCE includes both the nexus between Environment and Security and between Good governance, rule of law and the fight against organised crime and illicit trafficking
- **Environmental cooperation can also itself contribute to conflict prevention and confidence-building**
- Since Helsinki Final Act 1975, Environment present in the second dimension of cooperation for promotion of peace and security
- Maastricht December 2003: Strategy Document. **Good governance and Environmental protection help tackle threats to security**

The Participating States recognized that “*environmental degradation, unsustainable use of natural resources and mismanagement in the processing and disposal of wastes have a substantial impact on the health, welfare, stability and security of our countries.*”

- **Border Security and management concept, maritime & inland waterways cooperation (Ljubljana 2005, Helsinki 2008), fight against organised crime and terrorism**

International norms and frameworks



- **United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC).**



- **CITES Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora**



- **The International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (CITES, UNODC, WCO, World Bank).**



- **INTERPOL Environmental Security Unit**

How to better tackle the threat

- **Strengthen penal incrimination**: environmental crime should be considered as a **serious crime**. Fight impunity
- **Update laws and regulations** following international standards and norms
- **Collect data to better identify the threats and trafficking routes**
- **Improve detection and law enforcement** with **dedicated staff** working on environmental crime
- **Establish inter-agency task-forces able to coordinate** (NEST model by INTERPOL): police, customs, justice & environmental agencies, NGO's
- **Enhance cooperation at regional and international levels** (information sharing, joint investigations, confiscations of assets, sharing of best practices)
- **Develop cross-border activities and frameworks**
- **Detect illicit financial flows associated with environmental crime** activities
- **Fight corruption** associated with environmental crime

A top priority for France and the EU



- **Environmental crime is a French priority on the international agenda 2019/2020:**
Biodiversity /G7 Presidency 2019; One Planet Summit
Environmental crime has been one of the top priorities for Interior & Foreign Affairs G7: decision to **create a network of focal points**, promote task forces, Action Plan on cooperation, assess specific actions required to tackle use of internet, darknet or cryptocurrencies for environmental crime
One of the top priorities for the **14th Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Congress Kyoto April 2020**



- **EU Action Plan against trafficking in Wildlife (2016-2020). Environmental crime is one of the EMPACT priorities, Europol's and EU Member States priority crime areas, under the 2018–2021 EU Policy Cycle.**



- **JHA Council June 2019:** Ministers decided to develop this priority & harmonisation of penal laws and sanctions
- **French central authority & interagency task force OCLAESP has special responsibility as EMPACT driver**



Support to OSCE activities and tools



- **Increased relevance of environmental crime threats in the region**
- **Shared interests for Participating States** in exchanges of best practices, information and cooperation, e.g. training, SOP's, model legislations and equipment
- **Available tools and programs to develop:**
 - Office of the Coordinator for economic and environmental affairs (OCEEA): assists in monitoring developments, early-warning, facilitating design of policies and projects, counteracting threats
 - ENVSEC Initiative in 4 regions: Central Asia, South Caucasus, Eastern & South Eastern Europe
 - Police Unit, Border Management Staff College
 - OSCE Field Operations
- **Proposals put forward under IT Chair at the Ministerial Council in Milan:**
OSCE executive structures to help develop good practices, assist Participating States in implementing multilateral agreements, in enhancing coordination with international organisations

Thank you for your attention



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