

Rise in environmental crime addressed at ENPE and Eurojust conference

The Hague, 29 October 2019

International criminal networks are rapidly expanding their activities into the realm of environmental crime. With a threefold rise in major cases being opened at Eurojust last year, more co-ordination is necessary to combat this form of cross-border crime and ensure that health and safety standards and a high level of environmental protection are maintained. Tackling international environmental crime, as well the protection of endangered species and the natural habitat, such as preventing the dumping of hazardous materials, are of vital importance. Furthermore, organised crime undermines legally operating enterprises in the field of waste management.

How to win the fight against organised environmental crime is the main topic of the forthcoming joint conference, International collaboration & co-operation in the fight against environmental crime, organised by the European Network of Prosecutors for the Environment (ENPE) and Eurojust, the EU's Judicial Cooperation Unit, starting today at Eurojust's premises in The Hague.

The conference will consist of two days of plenary and breakout sessions, featuring presentations from four continents, including from specialists from Brazil, China and North and South America, as well as a dedicated workshop focusing on how best to co-operate globally in tackling environmental crime. More than 100 specialists from all over the world will attend the event.

Ahead of the conference, Eurojust's President, Mr Ladislav Hamran, said: *'Combatting environmental crime is of great importance, because it poses a serious threat to our health and physical safety. That's why Eurojust gladly joins forces with ENPE, and other actors concerned, in an effort to stop organised crime from getting a foothold in this sector.'*

ENPE's President, Ms Anne Brosnan, said: *'ENPE is a growing network of European prosecutors, sharing learning and best practice, establishing good case law and developing training opportunities in relation to the prosecution of environmental crime across Europe. Working with Eurojust and other partners, we will help to deliver better environmental regulation and a healthier, more sustainable environment. Our annual conference this year, held in conjunction with Eurojust, will provide a unique opportunity to embed, improve and expand this work.'*



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Tackling cross-border organised environmental crime is a priority for the European Union. The conference will focus on concrete steps to improve the

fight against environmental offences, including serious and organised crime, by improving international collaboration and co-operation in relation to the prosecution of environmental criminals. Judicial practitioners and specialists in the field will exchange best practice and discuss mutual approaches to promote effectiveness in prosecution and to strengthen and speed up investigations in general.

The conference will be opened by Eurojust's Vice-President, Mr Klaus Meyer-Cabri, and chaired by Ms Brosnan. The Dutch Secretary of State for the Environment, Ms Stientje van Veldhoven, will address the conference via video link. Speakers from, amongst other bodies, INTERPOL, the European Commission and the European Union Forum of Environmental Judges network (EUFJE), will share their knowledge and experience. The conference will end on Wednesday 30 October.