



WasteForce Crime Alert #2

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Work Package 2: Strategies and Methodologies

Deliverable 2.1: Waste Crime Alerts



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WASTEFORCE
Waste Crime Alert 2

Introduction

The objective of the Waste Crime Alerts is to provide authorities with an up-to-date overview of developments in the illicit waste trade. The Waste Force project partners collected and analysed the latest information on waste crime to identify trends and possible threats of illegal waste trade, for example to certain geographic locations/routes and the identification of modus operandi for specific waste flows. The collected open source information includes news cases, enforcement agency bulletins, outcomes of court cases, relevant publications and policy updates. The Waste Crime Alert will be published by the WasteForce project every three months.

This Waste Crime Alert #2 summarises information that was published between March 2019 and May 2019. The waste crime alerts report primarily on transboundary waste crime cases. The Waste Crime Alert is structured as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Summary of Publications and Legislative updates, see also the overview in Annex I
3. New videos and documentaries
4. Summary of News cases published, see also the overview in Annex II

Summary of new publications and legislative and governance updates. (Annex I)

In this section a summary will be presented of recent publications, highlighting important trafficking routes, hot spots, modus operandi and so on. A summary and references to each publication can also be found in Annex I.

Legislation and governance

In April 2019 the European Commission published the second Environmental Implementation Review (EIR), an overview of how EU environmental policies and laws are applied on the ground. The policy background refers to the enforcement the illegal shipment or dumping of waste, and to the “Action plan on Compliance Assurance” to deliver good practices and guidance on how to combat environmental crime. Some tools are promoted to digitalise enforcement administration. During the Basel Convention COPs in May 2019 governments agreed on landmark decisions to protect people and planet from hazardous chemicals and waste, including plastic waste. INTERPOL reported that G7 Interior Ministers have called for increased operational cooperation and sharing of law enforcement information via INTERPOL to better combat human trafficking, terrorism and environmental crime. It was also estimated that environmental criminals generate between USD 110 and 281 billion in illicit profits each year. Finally, on the national level an agreement was signed between different authorities in Italy, the Carabinieri and the Parliamentary Ecomafia Commission to enhance cooperation on countering waste crime.

Reports on Plastic Pollution and on Health Impacts

Several reports were published the last months on plastic pollution. WWF published a report on plastic pollution that calls for collective global action. WWF estimated that in 2016 4% of global plastic was exported, amounting to roughly 13 million metric tons, of which G7 countries were the source for nearly 50 per cent of this export waste. WWF also estimated that without China's waste management system, 111 million metric tons of plastic waste would be displaced by 2030.

A report by Gaia describes the results of a five-year study in the Philippines, it was concluded that waste assessments and brand audits are helping Philippine cities fight plastic pollution. A report by the Environmental Investigation Agency and Greenpeace describes the plastic habits of UK supermarkets and how they address plastic pollution. And finally, two reports by the Centre for International Environmental Law (CIEL) focus on the contribution of plastic to greenhouse gas emissions and the impact it has on human health. A report by the Health Council of the Netherlands describes how circular economy can also be structured in such a way to prevent health risks.

Law Enforcement Article on waste by World Customs Organisation

In February 2019 World Customs Organisation published an article on illegal waste trafficking. In this article WCO estimates that between 1992 and 2012, the volume of waste traded grew from 45.6 million tonnes to 222.6 million tonnes, an increase of more than 500% in just two decades. And the proportion of the world's waste being exported to developing countries grew by 40% between 1998 and 2009. The article briefly discusses the impact of the Chinese ban on waste, and the importance of data sharing and international cooperation and concludes that more data is key to get a better grip on this trade. In February 2019 WCO also published an update on its DEMETER operation. Another DEMETER operation is due to take place in 2019, and it is hoped that Customs administrations will once again join together to demonstrate their commitment to fighting illegal waste trafficking.

Videos and documentaries

Video Organisation	Waste Shipment Regulation: animated training video European Network of Prosecutors for the Environment (ENPE) Rob de Rijck, Chair of the LIFE-ENPE Waste Crime Working Group has worked closely with other members of the group to plan, script and develop a short-animated training video on the new Waste Shipment Regulation for prosecutors and other specialists. The 3-minute animation took several weeks to develop, with ENPE working in consultation with specialist animators.
Link	To access the training including an option with English subtitles, please see the following links: with subtitles: https://vimeo.com/333388717 without: https://vimeo.com/333388494

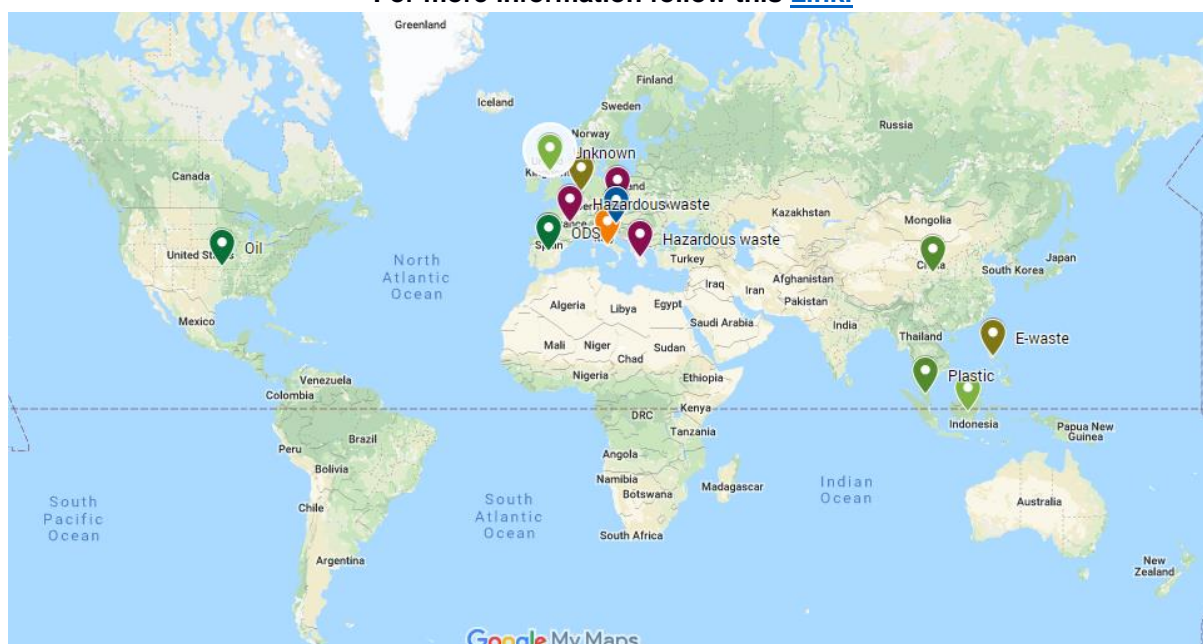
Documentary “Cement’s Dirty Business”**Organisation** Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP)**Summary** A new OCCRP investigation reveals multiple levels of crime and negligence in Europe’s growing waste-to-energy trade. In “Cement’s Dirty Business,” OCCRP journalists travel across Europe to show how Romania’s \$750 million cement industry now runs largely on trash, sometimes smuggled in from foreign countries with little regard for health or safety.**Link** <https://www.occrp.org/en/documentaries/cements-dirty-business/>

Analysis of news cases (Annex II)

This section presents an analysis of the news cases of transboundary waste movements between March 2019 and May 2019. In total, 21 cases were found, of which an overview can also be found in Annex III.

Global map with the listed news cases, the colours are linked to the type of waste.

For more information follow this [Link](#).



1. Types of waste, quantities and routes

In the identified 21 cases different types of waste were reported. In four cases it involved hazardous waste, in three cases plastic waste, in two cases ozone depleting substances (ODS) and in two cases e-waste. In addition, other types of waste that were reported are household waste, pesticides, bunker oil and mercury. Most of the identified cases (16) involve illegal exports of waste within or from Europe (including to Africa, Asia and South America), four cases involve illegal exports or disposals in Asia and finally two cases involved North America, see an overview of the types of wastes and routes in table 1.

In some of the cases the quantities of waste were reported, for example from Canada to Malaysia more than 100 containers were reported to be exported with plastic waste. In an operation in China 338,100 tons of waste were seized. In an illegal export from Italy to Burkina Faso, 950 non-functioning solar panels were found. However, most cases do not report the quantity or only a relatively small quantity (e.g. one container or one vehicle), see for more detailed information also Annex II.

Types of waste reported	Cases and Routes
E-waste	Case 10. Netherlands > Tanzania
	Case 15. Italy > Burkina Faso / Togo
Plastic	Case 1. not reported > Malaysia
	Case 19. Italy > Croatia
	Case 3. Unknown > China
Ozone Depleting Substances	Case 12. Spain > Panama
	Case 5. China
Hazardous waste	Case 6. Poland>Czech Republic
	Case 14. France
	Case 17. Italy
	Case 18. Greece > Mediterranean Sea
Household waste	Case 4. Canada > Philippines
Bunker oil	Case 21. United States
Pesticides	Case 8. Poland > Netherlands
Mercury	Case 7. Netherlands > Suriname
Unspecified / other	Case 2. South East China > Indonesia
	Case 9. Netherlands > United Arab Emirates
	Case 11. United Kingdom > Poland
	Case 13. Spain> United Kingdom/France
	Case 16. Italy
	Case 20. Slovenia

Table 1: Overview of types of waste and routes reported in the news cases

2. Modus operandi

In most cases only the type of crime was reported, but the modus operandi was not specified. At least ten cases involved illegal exports, and 5 cases involved illegal dumping/disposal of waste. Also, fraud and corruption were reported. The illegal export cases involved the following modus operandi: smuggling (1 case), exports of used goods without notification (2 cases) and export with false or wrong declaration (4) cases. Furthermore, in two of the identified cases waste was illegally traded online.

3. Criminal organisations

In nine of the cases was reported that there were one or multiple companies involved. In five of the cases a 'criminal organisation' was reported, of which in one was referred to a 'mafia' like organisation. In one case also illegal trade was done in cooperation with family members.

4. Sentences

Different types of penalties were reported in the cases. In four of the cases these were administrative penalties, including fines ranging from 4,000€ to 11,000€ and one fine of 40\$ million for illegal disposal of waste (including oil) on a cruise ship. In two cases the suspects were sentenced to community service. There were also persons arrested in three cases and in one case sentenced to 6-8 months suspended prison sentence and in one case to five years of probation. Furthermore, for the illegal exports, in two cases a take-back procedure was initiated. See also Annex III for detailed information on all cases.

Annex I: Publications and Legislative/Policy Updates

Legislation and Governance

Title	Environmental Implementation Review (EIR) including 28 country reports
Organisation	European Commission
Date	05 April 2019
Summary	<p>In April 2019 the European Commission published the second Environmental Implementation Review (EIR), an overview of how EU environmental policies and laws are applied on the ground. The EIR includes a communication of the policy findings, a policy background document and 28 country reports. One of the thematic areas of the EIR is waste management. Turning waste into a resource is supported by: (i) fully implementing EU waste legislation, which includes the waste hierarchy, the need to ensure separate collection of waste, the landfill diversion targets, etc.; (ii) reducing waste generation and waste generation per capita in absolute terms; and (iii) limiting energy recovery to non-recyclable materials and phasing out landfilling of recyclable or recoverable waste. SDG 12, mentioned above, supports actions on the field of waste management. The EIR Policy background also includes an assessment of Environmental governance. The policy background refers to the enforcement of the illegal shipment or dumping of waste. The EIR review also refers to the “Action plan on Compliance Assurance” to deliver good practices and guidance on how to combat environmental crime. The EIR review also refers to the EU policy of recognising environmental crime and especially wildlife and waste trafficking as a priority. The EIR review lists the actions led by enforcement agencies against environmental offences with support of EUROPOL. The review also notes that the networks of professionals (e.g. IMPEL) are playing a crucial role and the Commission intends to further strengthen their role.</p>

Finally, digitalisation and e-Government services can also help to develop a more effective and better integrated enforcement administration. The EIR review suggests two tools to develop a more effective and better integrated enforcement administration:

- The “Quality of Public Administration - A Toolbox for Practitioners: The Toolbox aims to support, guide and encourage those who want to modernise public administrations in support of prosperous, fair and resilient societies. It is intended as a reference and resource by pointing readers to existing EU policies and international practices, illustrated by almost 170 inspirational case studies.
- The European eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020: proposes an ambitious vision to make public administrations and public institutions in the European Union open, efficient and inclusive, providing borderless, personalised, user-friendly, end-to-end digital public services to all citizens and businesses in the EU.

Links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website of the Environmental Implementation Review: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/index_en.htm • EIR 28 Country Reports: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/country-reports/index_en.htm
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- The Quality of Public Administration - A **Toolbox** for Practitioners: <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/quality-public-administration-toolbox-practitioners>
- The European eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52016DC0179>

Title G7 ministers recognize INTERPOL's role (in countering environmental crime)

Organisation INTERPOL

Date 05 April 2019

Summary G7 Interior Ministers have called for increased operational cooperation and sharing of law enforcement information via INTERPOL to better combat human trafficking, terrorism and environmental crime. With environmental criminals estimated to generate between USD 110 and 281 billion in illicit profits each year, the G7 ministers said national law enforcement capabilities to conduct transnational investigations and operations needed to be enhanced along with increased information-sharing via INTERPOL. The need for a collective approach by law enforcement agencies, customs, environmental agencies, prosecutors and NGOs – as per the National Environmental Security Task Force template developed by INTERPOL – was also underlined at the meeting.

Link <https://www.interpol.int/News-and-Events/News/2019/G7-ministers-recognize-INTERPOL-s-role>

Title Governments agree landmark decisions to protect people and planet from hazardous chemicals and waste, including plastic waste

Organisation UN Environment

Date 12 May 2019

Summary Basel Convention COPs 2019: Governments agree landmark decisions to protect people and planet from hazardous chemicals and waste, including plastic waste.

Link <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/press-release/governments-agree-landmark-decisions-protect-people-and-planet>

Title Cooperation agreement (MoU) signed between the Italian Carabinieri and the Parliamentary Ecomafia Commission to counter illicit waste activities

Organisation The Italian Carabinieri and the Ecomafia commission

Date 16 May 2019

Summary A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Carabinieri and the Ecomafia commission to facilitate cooperation in different areas, including the exchange of information and operational cooperation to counter offences in the waste sector. Thanks to the protocol, the parties will be able to collaborate in carrying out judicial police activities. Additionally, training activities will be organized, best practices will be exchanged and internships organized.

Link http://www.ansa.it/canale_ambiente/notizie/istituzioni/2019/05/16/accordo-di-lavoro-fra-carabinieri-e-commissione-ecomafie_753a9ffb-8953-47a4-a4e4-554c1ffc3a9b.html

Reports on plastic pollution and on health impacts

Title **Solving Plastic pollution 2019 through accountability**

Organisation WWF

Year 05 March 2019

Summary The report by WWF is a call for collective global action. WWF urges governments, industries, and members of the public to acknowledge that the current global approach to addressing the plastics crisis is failing and calls on them to take actions. It argues that due to waste mismanagement, one-third of plastic waste is estimated to have entered nature as land, freshwater or marine pollution. Mismanaged waste is a direct result of underdeveloped waste management infrastructure. According to WWF, in 2016, four per cent of global plastic waste was exported, amounting to roughly 13 million metric tons, of which G7 countries were the source for nearly 50 per cent of this export waste. China recently increased quality standards for plastic waste imports into the country resulting in these G7 nations unable to export to China due to their highly contaminated domestic waste³¹. Given that two-thirds of all plastic waste exports had previously arrived in China, further changes to trade patterns could have a significant impact on plastic pollution. Without China's waste management system, it is estimated that 111 million metric tons of plastic waste would be displaced by 2030. Unless plastic exporters heighten their contamination standards, or countries invest in their own recycling capacity, the international plastics trade will remain fragile, and will risk exacerbating the damage that plastics have on the environment.

Link http://www.wwf.gr/images/pdfs/Solving_plastic_pollution_through_accountability.pdf

Title **How Waste Assessments and Brand Audits are Helping Philippine Cities Fight Plastic Pollution.**

Organisation Gaia

Date 07 March 2019

Summary The report, Plastics exposed: How waste assessments and brand audits are helping Philippine cities fight plastic pollution, uses data from household waste assessments and brand audits (WABA)[1] conducted by Mother Earth Foundation (MEF) in six cities and seven municipalities[2] across the country in the past five years. GAIA extrapolated the data to calculate daily and yearly plastic usage throughout the country in order to provide new quantitative evidence about plastic pollution in the Philippines. The report is being launched ahead of the UN Environment Assembly meeting next week, where plastic pollution will be discussed.

Link <http://www.no-burn.org/plastics-exposed/>

Title **Hazardous substances in a circular economy**

Organisation Health Council of the Netherlands

Date 15 May 2019

Summary Hazardous substances in a circular economy; an ideal circular economy all materials and products are reused and production of waste is zero. More recycling will take place in a circular economy than in the current one. Via recycling, hazardous substances may unintentionally end up in toys or food packaging for example. This can cause adverse health effects.

	The Dutch Health Council sees opportunities to structure the circular economy in such a way that health risks are largely prevented.
Link	https://www.healthcouncil.nl/documents/advisory-reports/2018/05/15/hazardous-substances-in-a-circular-economy
Title	Checking out plastics. A survey of UK supermarkets' plastic habits
Organisation	Environmental Investigation Agency - Greenpeace
Date	2019
Summary	Plastic from supermarket shelves represents a huge proportion of the total amount flooding onto the UK market each year – with even more of the material used before we place an item in our basket. Behind the scenes, plastic is endemic throughout the grocery supply chain: from the fields of plastic polytunnels used to grow fruit and vegetables through to the packaging used in transportation. All this comes at a huge environmental and social cost which we are just beginning to understand. In this report, the Environmental Investigation Agency and Greenpeace UK present the findings of the most comprehensive survey to date on how supermarkets are addressing plastic pollution. https://checkingoutonplastics.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2019/04/Checking-out-on-plastics.pdf
Title	Plastic & Climate: The Hidden Costs of a Plastic Planet
Organisation	CIEL Center for International Environmental Law
Date	May 2019
Summary	Amidst growing concern about the impacts of plastic on the oceans, ecosystems, and human health, there's another largely hidden dimension of the plastic crisis: plastic's contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. This report examines each of these stages of the plastic lifecycle to identify the major sources of greenhouse gas emissions, sources of uncounted emissions, and uncertainties that likely lead to underestimation of plastic's climate impacts. The report compares greenhouse gas emissions estimates against global carbon budgets and emissions commitments, and it considers how current trends and projections will impact our ability to reach agreed emissions targets. It also compiles data, such as downstream emissions and future growth rates, that have not previously been accounted for in widely used climate models. This accounting paints a grim picture: plastic proliferation threatens our planet and the climate at a global scale.
Link	https://www.ciel.org/reports/plastic-health-the-hidden-costs-of-a-plastic-planet-may-2019/
Title	Plastic & Health: The Hidden Costs of a Plastic Planet
Organisation	CIEL Center for International Environmental Law
Date	February 2019
Summary	Despite being one of the most pervasive materials on the planet, plastic and its impact on human health is poorly understood. Human exposure to it grows with increasing plastic production and use. Research into the human health impacts of plastic to date have focused narrowly on specific moments in the plastic lifecycle, from wellhead to refinery, from store shelves to human bodies, and from disposal to ongoing impacts as air pollutants and ocean plastic.

Individually, each stage of the plastic lifecycle poses significant risks to human health. Together, the lifecycle impacts of plastic paint an unequivocally toxic picture: plastic threatens human health on a global scale.

Link <https://www.ciel.org/reports/plastic-health-the-hidden-costs-of-a-plastic-planet-february-2019/>

Reports from Law Enforcement

Title **WCO News 88 - Illegal waste trafficking: more data is key to getting a better grip on this trade**

Organisation World Customs Organization

Date February 2019

Summary Between 1992 and 2012, the volume of waste traded grew from 45.6 million tonnes to 222.6 million tonnes, an increase of more than 500% in just two decades! The proportion of the world's waste being exported to developing countries grew by 40% between 1998 and 2009. Considering that, in 2016, the world generated 2 billion tonnes of municipal solid waste, the global waste trade today places severe pressure on developing countries. Africa and the Asia/Pacific regions are key destinations for large shipments of waste, especially e-waste, plastics, and various scrap metals. In West Africa, significant recipients include Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria. In Asia, favoured destinations include Bangladesh, India and Pakistan in the South, and China, Hong Kong, the Philippines and Vietnam in the Far East. Since 1 January 2018, China has banned the importation of 24 types of solid waste and scrap, including scrap metal, plastic waste, and e-waste. Although comprehensive statistics on global trade flows are lacking, estimates show that until that date, China was by far the biggest importer of waste, receiving half of all global waste imports, with Hong Kong acting as a major transit point.

Illicit flows

Illegal activities take different forms: transporting waste on the black market, mixing different types of waste, declaring hazardous waste as non-hazardous, or classifying waste as second-hand goods. Indeed, when products are classified as second-hand goods, they are no longer governed by international waste regulations and can be traded with developing countries. (...) These imports also put pressure on port infrastructure. Since China introduced the ban, neighbouring countries and certain African countries have become increasingly targeted by shippers of illegal waste. Even when shipments are legal, these countries find themselves lacking the capacity to accommodate them at their ports and other points of entry.

Lack of data

It should be stressed repeatedly that there is still not enough data available to get a clear picture of illicit international waste flows. In order to identify trafficking trends as accurately as possible and enhance risk management, countries must register their seizures in their national enforcement database, as well as in the WCO Customs Enforcement Network (CEN) database. Such data will enable the targeting of Customs and law enforcement operations to be refined, whilst providing qualitative intelligence. In the training domain, the recently [Green Customs Guide to Multilateral Environmental Agreements \(MEAs\)](#) has been updated.

Link https://mag.wcoomd.org/uploads/2019/02/WCONews88_UK.pdf

Title **WCO News 88 – Operation Demeter**
Organisation World Customs Organization
Date February 2019
Summary In order to get a snapshot of illicit trade flows in waste and to strongly encourage further attention and action from Customs administrations, the WCO decided, in 2009, to organize an enforcement operation called Operation DEMETER. During the seven-week long operation, Customs administrations in 65 countries targeted illicit cross-border shipments of hazardous and other waste en route from seaports in Europe to seaports in Africa and the Asia/Pacific region. A second, third and fourth incarnation of the operation was launched in 2012, 2013 and 2018 respectively. This time, all modes of transportation and all routes used for the illegal shipment of waste were targeted. Once again, seizures were mostly made at European departure points, with West Africa as a major destination region, especially for used car parts and, increasingly, for e-waste.

DEMETER IV saw the best results in terms of the volume of waste seized, yielding over 326,133 tonnes and 54,782 pieces of various types of waste, including mineral slag, plastics, e-waste, waste rubber, municipal waste, clothes, paper, scrap metal and batteries. The largest single seizure was a shipment of about 180,000 tonnes of smelting slag from Spain, which was intercepted by China Customs.

During the course of each operation, Customs officers shared intelligence and applied profiling and targeting techniques to identify high-risk consignments shipped on all routes and via all modalities. Participants relied on CENcomm, the WCO's secure and encrypted communication tool, to exchange information on concealment methods and on the identity of the infringers and the parties involved. It goes without saying that sustained communication between Customs administrations could result in more timely interception of illegal shipments and better intelligence.

The biggest challenge

Illegal waste trafficking is a little-known, lucrative business with devastating consequences for human health and the environment. A lot of knowledge can be extracted from databases using data mining techniques, supporting effective frontline enforcement at borders. Unfortunately, collecting decent amounts of quality data from Customs administrations remains the biggest challenge. Solving this challenge will not only contribute to better enforcement, but also have a far-reaching impact on efforts to protect the environment, as well as the safety of people around the world.

For more information, please visit: https://mag.wcoomd.org/uploads/2019/02/WCONews88_UK.pdf

Annex II: Cases reported in the news

Asia

Case 1. Malaysia

Title	Checks show dirty plastic still being smuggled into Malaysian ports
Date	April 23, 2019
Type of waste	Plastic
Quantity/Value	24 cargo containers containing contaminated plastic waste
Routes	Port Klang, Malaysia
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi	Smuggling of contaminated plastic waste that was declared as 'clean waste'
Criminal organisation	N.A.
Summary	The smuggling of contaminated plastic waste into the country is still ongoing, even though the government has banned the import of such materials last year. The smuggling activities were unearthed following the discovery of 24 cargo containers at West Port, containing contaminated plastic waste which could no longer be recycled. " All the 24 containers were declared as having 'clean' waste. However, further checks showed that they contained prohibited material. We also received reports of containers bearing contaminated plastic waste in North Port as well as in Penang. "This month, the authorities will conduct operations at all ports nationwide. We are serious in our aim to tackle this issue. We have already identified the import company. 148 illegal plastic recycling plants nationwide, including those which failed to comply with the Environmental Quality Act 1974, were shut down from January to date.
For more information, please visit:	https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2019/04/482312/checks-show-dirty-plastic-still-being-smuggled-malaysian-ports

Case 2. Indonesia

Title	Dutch dredger seized for alleged waste dumping
Date	10 April 2019
Type of waste	Unknown
Quantity/Value	Unknown
Routes	South East China- Indonesia
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi	Waste dumping at sea
Enforcement Action	The Captain (of Dutch nationality) and 15 crew (including Dutch, Ukrainian, Polish and Filipino nationalities) were detained or arrested, for investigation. Captain is facing 2-year imprisonment or fine of some \$21,000
Criminal organisation	Captain (of Dutch nationality) and 15 crew (including Dutch, Ukrainian, Polish and Filipino nationalities)

Summary Indonesian Navy fast respond unit on Apr 8 detained or arrested Dutch hopper dredger VOX MAXIMA in Galang Island waters, Riau islands, Indonesia, south of Singapore Strait, for alleged waste dumping, without clarifying the character of dumped waste, and its' quantity. According to available information and AIS records, dredger was working in South East China sea waters for years. It is not clear, and it wasn't explained, why did dredger sail to Indonesian waters and why it was illegal, if according to Master's statement, dredger was managed by Singaporean company. It can be assumed from Indonesian reports, that the Captain (of Dutch nationality) and 15 crew (including Dutch, Ukrainian, Polish and Filipino nationalities) were detained or arrested, for investigation. Captain is facing 2-year imprisonment or fine of some \$21,000.

For more information, please visit: <https://maritimebulletin.net/2019/04/10/dutch-dredger-seized-for-alleged-waste-dumping/>

Case 3. China

Title China launches fresh wave of anti-waste smuggling action
Date 12 April 2019
Type of waste The waste included plastics and slag
Quantity/Value In 2018 338,100 tons of waste were seized
Routes Unknown
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi Smuggling
Enforcement Action In 2018 481 cases of illegal waste activity were uncovered. In 2019 so far 22 smuggling operations were identified, and 115 suspects have been detained.
Criminal organisation Unknown

Summary This follows on from ten months of enforcement action over the last year, dubbed 'Blue Sky 2018' which saw a reported 481 cases of illegal waste activity uncovered by customs officials. Details of the 2019 Blue Sky campaign were outlined by the General administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC) today (12 April), with a focus on 'control and prevention of illicit import of waste'. GACC said that the campaign has so far focused on 11 Customs Districts in eight provinces, and has identified 22 smuggling operations, with 115 suspects having been detained. This includes the seizure of 338,100 tons of waste including plastics and slag. "Since this year (till March 20), the legally imported solid waste has reached 3.02 million tons, down 37% year-on-year, while the investigated smuggling cases totalled 53 in number, down 43% year-on-year, with 67.9% thereof seized in the past few years.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.letsrecycle.com/news/latest-news/china-launches-fresh-wave-of-anti-waste-smuggling-action/>

Case 4. Philippines (Canada)

Title	Trash talk: Philippine president to 'declare war' on Canada in waste dispute
Date	24 April 2019
Type of waste	Household and electronic waste
Quantity/Value	More than 100 containers.
Routes	Canada to Philippines
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi	Illegal export of household rubbish and electronic waste
Enforcement Action	In 2016, a Filipino judge ruled that Canada must take back the 1,300 tonnes of waste, which was brought to the Philippines by an importer and intercepted by the country's customs bureau.
Criminal organisation	Company
Summary	More than 100 containers of waste were shipped in batches from Canada to the Philippines in 2013 and 2014, falsely declared by a private firm as recyclable plastic scraps according to Philippine officials.
For more information, please visit:	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/apr/24/philippine-president-rodriigo-duterte-to-declare-war-on-canada-in-waste-dispute https://www.rte.ie/radio/radioplayer/html5/#/radio1/21562939

Case 5. China

Title	Discharges of prohibited gas, from an area of China increased by 110 per cent
Date	23 May 2019
Type of waste	Ozone depleting substances
Quantity/Value	Unknown
Routes	Unknown
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi	Unknown
Criminal organisation	Unknown
Summary	Article about increasing of discharges of ozone depleting substances (CFC 11) from eastern part of China.
For more information, please visit:	https://zelenigenij.24ur.com/clanek/podnebne-spremembe/v-zadnjih-treh-letih-so-se-izpusti-prepovedanega-plina-z-obmocja-kitajske-povecali-za-110-odstotkov.html

Europe

Case 6. Poland (Czech Republic)

Title	Hazardous waste exported from Poland to the Czech Republic is stored in rented production halls, buried in quarries or smoked illegally.
Date	4-3-2019
Type of waste	Hazardous chemicals
Quantity/Value	500.000 tons of waste. After deducting the costs of transporting garbage and renting a warehouse, the organizers' profit is 6,000. Crowns (~233€) on every ton of waste.
Routes	Poland - Czech Republic
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi	Illegal export of waste tyres and hazardous chemical waste
Criminal organisation	'Polish junk mafia'
Summary	"Mlada Fronta Dnes" noted that the waste brought to the Czech Republic in recent months is probably only a small part of what the Polish junk mafia brought to their own country. The tires come from Italy and Great Britain and the chemicals from Germany.
For more information, please visit:	https://newsbeezer.com/polandeng/mlada-fronta-dnes-on-the-import-of-hazardous-waste-from-poland-business/

Case 7. Netherlands (Suriname)

Title	Export of mercury
Date	29-1-2019
Type of waste	Pure mercury
Quantity/Value	10 kg
Routes	Netherlands-Suriname
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi	Illegal export of hazardous materials
Enforcement	Detected by Dutch customs. Sentence is 200 hours of community service.
Action	
Criminal organisation	Family related
Summary	Suspect attempted to export a quantity of pure mercury in paint cans to his sister in Suriname. Obviously for illegal gold mining. Labels of the cans were falsified.
For more information, please visit:	http://deeplink.rechtspraak.nl/uitspraak?id=ECLI:NL:HR:2019:114

Case 8. Netherlands (Poland)

Title	Import of illegal pesticides
Date	6-3-2019
Type of waste	Illegal pesticides vertimec, Apollo, Envidor, Floramite, Nissorun
Quantity/Value	Quantity unclear. Trade lasted for at least one year.

Routes	Netherlands-Poland (Polish labels)
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi	Trade via website.
Enforcement Action	Suspect is sentenced 100 hours of community service and deprivation of 11.000,- euros
Criminal organisation	Individual with network
Summary	Multiple illegal pesticides were traded, stored and repacked provided with false labels.
For more information, please visit:	https://uitspraken.rechtspraak.nl/inziendocument?id=ECLI:NL:RBAMS:2019:1729&showbutton=true

Case 9. Netherlands (United Arab Emirates)

Title	Export of used ball-bearings without notification
Date	14-3-2019
Type of waste	Ball-bearings
Quantity/Value	Container
Routes	Netherlands-United Arab Emirates
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi	Export of used products without notification.
Enforcement Action	Inspection, Administrative, fined 4000, - euro
Criminal organisation	N.A.
Summary	Export in used products without notification is considered illegal export of waste and a violation of the European regulation on shipments of waste (EG no. 1013/2006)
For more information, please visit:	http://deeplay.rechtspraak.nl/uitspraak?id=ECLI:NL:RBROT:2019:2027

Case 10. Netherlands (Tanzania)

Title	Export of WEEE to Tanzania without notification
Date	28-2-2019
Type of waste	WEEE
Quantity/Value	Container which was sold for EUR 2 396
Routes	Netherlands - Tanzania
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi	Export of used products without notification.
Enforcement Action	Administrative
Criminal organisation	Company involvement

Summary Tronex BV operates a wholesale residual stock business. On 10 February 2014, it was found to be planning to ship a consignment of electrical equipment, or to have it shipped, in a container to a third party in Tanzania to which it had sold the consignment for a total amount of EUR 2 396.01. Tronex had bought up the goods from retailers, wholesalers and/or importers. The consignment of goods consisted of electric kettles, steam irons, fans and shavers. Most of the appliances were in their original packaging, although some of the appliances in the consignment were unpackaged. The consignment consisted of appliances which had been returned by consumers under a product guarantee, on the one hand, and goods which, because of a change to the product range, for example, were or could no longer be sold (normally), on the other. A number of the boxes in which the appliances were packaged carried a notice stating their defects. The glass in some of the glass kettles was damaged. The shipment was to take place without notification or consent in accordance with the Waste Shipment Regulation.

For more information, please visit: <http://curia.europa.eu/juris/document/document.jsf?text=&docid=211199&pageIndex=0&doclang=EN&mode=req&dir=&occ=first&part=1>

Case 11. United Kingdom (Poland)

Title 4,000 tonnes of waste illegally dumped in Poland returns to the UK
Date 10 Apr 2019
Type of waste Unknown
Quantity/Value 4,000 tonnes
Routes United Kingdom - Poland
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi The waste was illegally shipped to Poland under the guise of recycling.
Criminal organisation Three companies

Summary Almost 4,000 tonnes of poor quality, unsorted waste that was illegally shipped to Poland from the UK under the guise of recycling has been returned. The Environment Agency (EA) confirmed to ENDS that last week it had overseen the return of the waste and ensured "it has been disposed of responsibly" in the UK. In August, the agency announced three companies suspected of illegally shipping the waste were under investigation, however the EA said it was unable to comment further at this time because a criminal investigation is ongoing.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.endsreport.com/article/1581604/4000-tonnes-waste-illegally-dumped-poland-returns-uk>

Case 12. Spain (supported by EUROPOL)

Date 05 April 2019
Title How a company earned up to €1 million illegally trading ten tons of ozone depleting substances
Type of waste Ozone depleting substances
Routes Spain – Panama

Quantity/ Value	10 000 kg of R-22 gas being traded illegally as regenerated gas with €500 000 to €1 million in profit
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi	The company repackaged R-22 refrigerant liquids that should have been sorted as hazardous waste
Criminal organisation	A company and an organised crime group
Summary	As part of a Europol coordinated operation, the Spanish Civil Guard (Guardia Civil) discovered a company and an organised crime group involved in the illegal export of ozone-depleting substances. The investigation revealed that a company in Valencia, Spain, was involved in smuggling ten tons of R-22 refrigerant gas without a legal licence, bringing in €500 000 to €1 million in profit for the criminal gang. Police launched their investigations in 2017 when the Spanish Ministry of Environment was informed of R-22 gas allegedly being exported to Panama illegally. The operation disclosed that the company repackaged R-22 refrigerant liquids that should have been sorted as hazardous waste. This led to around 10 000 kg of R-22 gas being traded illegally as regenerated gas. The investigation revealed that these ten tons of illegally exported gas would have released 17 000 tons of CO ₂ into the atmosphere. A video has been posted on the discovery of the ozone depleting substance: https://youtu.be/4NgID4qqrMo
For more information, please visit:	https://www.europol.europa.eu/newsroom/news/how-company-earned-to-%E2%82%AC1-million-illegally-trading-ten-tons-of-ozone-depleting-substances https://youtu.be/4NgID4qqrMo

Case 13. Spain (supported by EUROPOL)

Date	27 March 2019
Title	Haulier in Spain caught cheating emission regulations designed to prevent air pollution.
Routes	Spain – France, Spain- United Kingdom
Quantity/ Value	30 vehicles
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi	Cheat devices which disable pollution control system on lorries
Criminal organisation	Company involvement
Enforcement action	Initiated over a year ago by a regional unit of SEPRONA, this investigation was made possible thanks to the collaboration between the Spanish Guardia Civil, Europol, transport companies, lorry manufacturers and Adblue. Intelligence uncovered during this investigation has been passed on to Europol as several connections were made with France and the United Kingdom.
Summary	A road haulage company based in Madrid is under investigation by the Spanish Guardia Civil (Civil Guard), and four people have been arrested, after roadside checks uncovered high levels of use of cheat devices which disable pollution control system on lorries. 30 diesel vehicles from that company were caught with such cheat devices – called emulators.

Adblue is an additive which converts harmful nitrogen oxide from a diesel vehicle exhaust into harmless nitrogen and water steam. This process considerably reduces the emission of nitrogen oxide, which is a major source of air pollution. The emulators work by tricking the lorry's electronic system into "thinking" that the selective catalytic reduction (SCR) control system is functioning correctly, when it is not functioning at all. Operators using these devices do not have to bear the cost of purchasing Adblue fluid or maintaining the complex SCR system on their vehicles. These emulators however allows the lorries to produce unregulated amounts of harmful nitrogen oxides well above the safe level.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.europol.europa.eu/newsroom/news/haulier-in-spain-caught-cheating-emission-regulations-designed-to-prevent-air-pollution>

Case 14. France

Title The traffic of toxic waste from Arcelor is suspended and fined
Date 1 April 2019
Type of waste Hazardous waste
Quantity/Value Unknown
Routes France
Enforcement Action The custom officer has been sentenced to 6 months suspended prison sentence and a fine of €6,000. The former director of Sonolub, also retired, was sentenced to 8 months suspended sentence and a fine of €10,000. Sonolub, as a legal entity, was fined €75,000. The three will have to pay customs jointly 1.6 million euros for the TIPP wrongly refunded. Arcelor had not been sued in this case, mainly for a change of company name and prescription problems.

Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi Fraud, document falsification, export and sell of hazardous waste

Criminal organisation Company + corruption of 1 custom officer

Summary Between 2001 and 2005, a former customs officer falsified documents to declare the naphthalene fuel produced by Arcelor as domestic fuel and facilitate its export. The company Sonolub, based in Normandy, was under contract to recycle the naphthalene fuel. She never received the fuel, but provided bills showing that the product had been processed in her factory. The dangerous product was then resold, and customs unlocked TIPP money to Arcelor.

For more information, please visit: <https://lavdn.lavoixdunord.fr/561457/article/2019-04-01/le-traffic-de-dechets-toxiques-provenant-d-arcelor-se-solde-par-des-peines-avec>

Case 15. Italy

Title Illicit trafficking of e-waste
Date May 2019
Type of waste 950 used solar panels not functioning, declared as used e-waste and other e-waste found in the seized warehouse.
Routes Italy - Burkina Faso / Togo
Quantity/ Value Unknown

Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi	Unknown
Enforcement Action	The ecologic operative section of Italian carabinieri and the Customs agency seized the warehouse where the solar panels and a number of other electronic products and batteries were stored. 3 persons, one from Morocco and two from Burkina Faso, have been so far reported for the crime of illicit transboundary shipment of e-waste.
Criminal organisation Summary	Organization composed by 3 persons, one from Morocco and two from Burkina Faso The enforcement action found out the lack of relevant documents to guarantee the actual functionality of solar panels and mis-packaging to avoid damages during the transportation phase. The solar panels derived from casting off of used panels in different Italian regions. Moreover, in the transportation documents a lower number of panels was declared. Two illicit transports of panels to Burkina Faso and Togo were organized.
For more information, please visit:	https://www.ilgazzettino.it/nordest/padova/traffico_illecito_di_rifiuti_padova-4477816.html

Case 16. Italy

Title	'Ecomafia' conquering the industrial warehouses in Florence
Date	1 April 2019
Type of waste	Waste and residual elements of industrial processes
Quantity/Value	Under investigation
Routes	At local level, in the region of Tuscany
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi	Illicit storage and disposal of waste
Enforcement Action	Preventive action, to detect illicit acts
Criminal organisation Summary	Criminal organizations dealing with illicit disposal of waste. Thanks to a collaboration actions between mayors and the prefect in the Tuscany region, an emerging illicit activity has been detected. A number of dismissed industrial warehouses seem to be more and more used by criminal organizations to illegally store and dispose different kind of waste. A monitoring and preventive action is thus ongoing, to avoid these illicit activities and possibly promote the use of these warehouses for activities of social and economic development at local level.
For more information, please visit:	https://www.toscanachiantiamambiente.it/lecomafia-alla-conquista-dei-capannoni-industriali-di-firenze/

Case 17. Italy

Title	Illicit trafficking of waste and pollution - Two people arrested in Trapani
Date	May 2019
Type of waste	Urban solid waste

Quantity/Value	Unknown
Routes	South Italy
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi	Illicit disposal of urban solid waste
Enforcement Action	2 people arrested; 8 warranty notices; search of the involved company 'Energeticambiente' to acquire the relevant documentation.
Criminal organisation	Two managers of the company in charge of waste disposal.
Summary	In order to reduce the costs for the disposal of urban solid waste, two managers were responsible of systematically spilling liquids from urban waste and illegally disposing soil coming from the street cleaning process. They were also illegally storing special waste and hazardous and non-hazardous urban waste.
For more information, please visit:	https://www.lastampa.it/2019/05/16/italia/traffico-illecito-di-rifiuti-e-inquinamento-due-arresti-a-trapani-yppDNxUD3xSqJQRdg46CzM/pagina.html

Case 18. Greece

Title	Dumping of waste
Date	May 2019
Type of waste	Hazardous and toxic waste
Quantity/Value	Huge quantities of car batteries, tyres, metal waste and other hazardous waste collected in 152 sea places
Routes	
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi	Illicit dumping of hazardous and toxic waste in the Mediterranean Sea.
Criminal organisation	
Summary	The huge quantity of polluting hazardous waste was collected in 2 hours around the Cyclades islands, through an awareness action involving an association of scuba divers un 152 different places.
For more information, please visit:	https://it.euronews.com/2019/05/07/un-mare-di-rifiuti-alle-ciclad-ri-recuperate-1-5-tonnellate-in-due-ore

Case 19. Slovenia (Italy – Croatia)

Title	Shipments of waste under microscope
Date	5 May 2019
Type of waste	Plastic
Quantity/Value	1 vehicle (23.120 kg)
Routes	Italy - Croatia
Type of crimes/ Modus Operandi	Illegal shipment (RDF declared as plastic waste)
Enforcement Action	Pending, take-back procedure
Criminal organisation	Unknown

organisation

Summary Summary of April joint inspections in Slovenia within SWEAP project. During one joint inspection illegal shipment of RDF found, declared as plastic waste. The case is still pending, take back procedure will follow.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.primorske.si/kronika/posiljke-odpadkov-pod-drobnogledom>

Case 20. Slovenia

Title In recent years several fires in waste management facilities

Date 09 May 2019

Type of waste Different types of waste

Quantity/Value Unknown

Routes Unknown

Type of Unknown

crimes/ Modus

Operandi

Criminal Unknown

organisation

Summary Summary of fires, happened in waste management facilities in Slovenia in past years

For more information, please visit: <https://www.24ur.com/novice/slovenija/v-zadnjih-letih-vec-pozarov-v-predelovalnicah-odpadkov.html>

North America**Case 21. United States**

Title Carnival cruise ships are an environmental plague. Maryland must oppose them.

Date 24-04-2019

Type of waste Illegal dumping of wastes: oil, sewage, refrigerant gas, grey water and food

Quantity/Value Oil quantity unknown, 500,000 gallons of sewage, thousands of pounds of refrigerants and thousands of gallons of food waste

Routes Different United States Ports, Alaskan waters

Type of Dumping of waste

crimes/ Modus

Operandi

Enforcement Action A federal judge recently threatened to temporarily ban Carnival cruise ships from docking at U.S. ports. If the judge decides not to carry through with this threat, Maryland should. Carnival Corp. was handed a \$40 million fine and five years of probation in 2016 for seven felony charges related to illegal oil dumping and their subsequent cover-up.

Criminal organisation Company

Summary

A federal judge recently threatened to temporarily ban Carnival cruise ships from docking at U.S. ports. U.S. District Judge Patricia Seitz is expected to decide on whether to temporarily ban the cruise ships from docking in the U.S. after a June hearing. Carnival has a long history of environmental violations, including illegally dumping 500,000 gallons of sewage in a single year and burning unfiltered heavy-fuel oil for 24 hours off the coast of North America in a protected area. In addition to falsifying training and maintenance records, the company has also leaked thousands of pounds of refrigerant gas and dumped grey water and thousands of gallons of food waste. The cruise line also reportedly has a history of striking whales in the Alaskan waters.

For more information, please visit:

<https://dbknews.com/2019/04/24/maryland-baltimore-carnival-cruise-ship-environment-policy-oil-dumping-emissions-epa/>