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**NOTE**

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On 19-20 November 2014 the annual general meeting of informal network for countering environmental crime (EnviCrimeNet) was held in The Hague, hosted by Europol.

The meeting was attended by delegates from 16 Member States (BE, BG, DK, DE, EE, IE, ES, FR, HR, IT, NL, AT, PT, SK, SE, UK, as well as 5 participants from Europol and 1 from Eurojust. In addition, experts from Albania, FYROM and Kosovo<sup>1</sup> attended the meeting.

During the open session representatives from the EFFACE<sup>2</sup> project, Agoria (Belgium) and University of Utrecht attended the meeting.

The LEWP is invited to take note of the report of this meeting set out below, as prepared by EnviCrimeNet.

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<sup>1</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

<sup>2</sup> EFFACE - short for "European Union Action to Fight Environmental Crime" - is a 40-month EU funded research project. Eleven European research institutions and think tanks are involved. EFFACE assesses the impacts of environmental crime as well as effective and feasible policy options for combating it from an interdisciplinary perspective, with a focus on the EU.

**Report on the annual general meeting of EnviCrimeNet,  
held on 19-20 November 2014 in The Hague, hosted by Europol**

After some positive experience with inviting an academic field researcher in the previous year, this time the annual general meeting of EnviCrimeNet was divided into an open and a closed session. The open session on day 1 was used to get into contact with researchers (e.g. from the EFFACE project) but also private sector. The main reason for this exchange was to explore possible synergies through Public Private Partnerships (PPP) and closer cooperation with NGOs and universities.

A number of presentations was given during the open session on the following topics:

- PPP action in combating illegal waste shipments;
- Preliminary mid-term results of the EFFACE project as presented by the Commission (DG Home);
- Life + Waste Crime Project (Scottish Environmental Protection Agency);
- Live presentation of an environmental crime mobile phone app for Dutch police officers (available for all EnviCrimeNet members);
- Update on caviar trafficking (field researcher, University of Utrecht).

The tour de table confirmed that many countries have problems with waste trafficking as well as CITES<sup>3</sup>-related crimes. In fact, during later discussions this was used to make suggestions for future meetings, such as splitting the participants into 2 or more groups and to have some workshops on urgent subjects.

The first preliminary findings from the EnviCrimeNet/Europol cooperation 'Intelligence Project on Environmental Crime' (IPEC) were also presented. The findings were appreciated and approved by the participants.

During the closed session on day 2 two Europol Focal Points (Copy and ITOC) provided updates on trafficking of (counterfeit) pesticides and waste trafficking by Italian organised crime groups.

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<sup>3</sup> The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

A Carabinieri delegate presented the Italian Report on waste trafficking crimes, revealing a number of previously unknown details and providing insight into successful strategies (legally and operational) as well as tactical measures employed for combating organised waste crimes in Italy during the last years.

Interpol gave an update on their global activities and the use of National Environmental Security Task Forces (NESTs).

In addition, there was a discussion on the way forward for EnviCrimeNet and how to develop and improve further as a network of practitioners. One of the main issues is the current system of self-funding. Even with only two Steering Group (SG) and one annual general meeting per year, a number of network members were not able to attend. Slovakia, accepted as new SG member, is currently preparing the SK Presidency for the second half of 2016 and proposed to start an EU funded project, which could also incorporate meetings of the network. This was widely appreciated (so far three MS will reportedly join SK with the application for funding).

The network continues to aim for having (currently) one single point of contact for each member jurisdiction to help with operational or strategic problems and provide guidance. In the future it needs to be determined how EnviCrimeNet, as law enforcement practitioner network, positions itself as far as cooperation with management agencies is concerned.

The meeting unanimously voted that NL keeps the chair for the network for another year with Mr Roel Willekens as chairperson.

The next SG meeting will most likely be held in the Netherlands (location to be determined at a later stage) in spring 2015; the annual general meeting in October 2015 in Milan (hosted by Italian Arma dei Carabinieri and Corpo de Forestale dello Stato).