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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Note on Directive (EU) 2024/1203 on the protection of the environment through criminal law : strengthened legal framework for combating environmental crime more effectively
- Note by Eurojust

Delegations will find attached the cover page and the first page of the above-mentioned note by Eurojust. The complete note is available at Eurojust's [website](#).



Note on Directive (EU) 2024/1203 on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law

Strengthened legal framework for combating
environmental crime more effectively

29 May 2026



NOTE ON DIRECTIVE (EU) 2024/1203 ON THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH CRIMINAL LAW

Strengthened legal framework for combatting environmental crime more effectively



Instrument **replacing Directives 2008/99/EC and 2009/123/EC** (protection of the environment through criminal law; ship-source pollution).

Deadline for transposition: **21 May 2026**. Applies to all EU Member States except Denmark and Ireland.



Harmonised definitions of environmental criminal offences, incl. 20 specific offences and the qualified criminal offence for catastrophic consequences comparable to ecocide.

Much stricter and more specific penalties for natural and legal persons, incl. minimum- maximum levels of imprisonment terms and fines.



Enhanced rules on national jurisdiction over environmental criminal offences, incl. the obligation to cooperate for determining the best placed jurisdiction to conduct criminal proceedings and to **refer conflicts of jurisdiction to Eurojust**.

Strong emphasis on **improving cooperation**:



- **at the national level:** better coordination within the entire national enforcement chain, from administrative inspection bodies to police and prosecutors; development of national strategies; sharing best practices; creation of specialised units; providing training for judges, prosecutors, and police;
- **at the EU level:** obligation for Member States, Eurojust, Europol, the EPPO, OLAF and the European Commission to cooperate in the fight against cross-border environmental crime; emphasised role of **Eurojust to provide technical and operational assistance** to facilitate coordination of cross-border investigations.



Alignment of measures and tools to be used in criminal proceedings:

- availability of **investigative tools incl. special investigative measures** like those available for organised crime or other serious crimes;
- obligation to conduct **tracing, freezing and confiscation** of instrumentalities and proceeds of environmental criminal offences.

 EUR-Lex

Text of the Directive on EUR-Lex: Directive - EU - 2024/1203 - EN - EUR-Lex



 EUROJUST

Fight against environmental crime on the [Eurojust website](#)



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