Jurisprudence Journal Vol 18 – (N°: 02- S N 38) – : October 2026 – PP 749 – 762
ISSN 8615 – 1112 EISSN 2600-6065

INTERPOL's Efforts in Fighting Against Environmental Crimes

جهود منظمة الانتربول في مكافحة الجريمة البيئية

Dr. Kenza Bahmed [1]

Faculty of Law, University of Algiers 1 (Algeria)
knz.bmed@hotmail.com

Received	Accepted	Published
Apr – 01 - 2026	Sep – 07 - 2026	Oct – 31 - 2026

Abstract:

The global environment is increasingly threatened by widespread environmental crimes, which are regarded among the most serious types of crime due to their transboundary impacts and their adverse effects on human security and environmental stability. INTERPOL stands out as one of the most active international organizations in combating crimes globally, and it has made the fight against environmental crime one of its key priorities. This paper aims to define environmental crime, examine its essential elements, characteristics, and various forms, and highlight the main initiatives undertaken by INTERPOL to combat such crimes.

Keywords: *Environmental Crime, Elements, INTERPOL, Initiatives, Projects.*

الملخص :

تشهد البيئة العالمية انتشاراً واسعاً للجرائم البيئية التي تعد من أخطر الجرائم، لما لها من آثار عابرة للحدود تهدد أمن الإنسان واستقراره في بيئته. و تعتبر منظمة الإنتربول من أكثر المنظمات الدولية نشاطًا في ملاحقة مرتكبي مختلف الجرائم حول العالم، كما و قد جعلت مكافحة الجرائم البيئية من بين أهم أولوياتها. تهدف هذه الورقة إلى التعريف بالجريمة البيئية وأركانها وخصائصها وأشكالها، بالإضافة إلى تسليط الضوء على أبرز المبادرات التي تولت منظمة الإنتربول الاشراف عليها في سبيل مكافحة الجريمة البيئية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الجريمة البيئية، الأركان، الانتربول، المبادرات، المشاريع.

[1] *Corresponding author: Dr. Kenza Bahmed,* ***e-mail:*** *knz.bmed@hotmail.com*

Introduction:

Environmental problems have become one of the most pressing global challenges, attracting the growing attention of the international community. The contemporary global environment is experiencing significant deterioration and escalating degradation, largely driven by human activities. These include the overexploitation of natural resources, widespread pollution of air, water, and soil, deforestation, and rapid industrial expansion, all of which contribute to the exacerbation of climate change and biodiversity loss.

Furthermore, the emergence of the so-called environmental crimes, committed by human actors and not restricted by geographical borders, has become a matter of serious concern. These crimes are regarded among the most severe forms of criminal activity due to their adverse and far-reaching impacts on both human populations and their natural environment, ultimately threatening human security and environmental stability.

Interpol or the International Criminal Police Organization is one of the most active international organizations, whose primary mission is to support police agencies around the world in the fight against crime and prosecute criminals across borders. Its activities span a wide range of criminal areas, including terrorism, organized crime, cybercrime, human trafficking, and money laundering, reflecting its central role in facilitating international police cooperation.

As a result of the global spread of environmental crimes, combating this type of criminal activity has become one of INTERPOL's key priorities. Particular attention is given to offenses such as illegal wildlife trafficking, illegal hunting, deforestation, and pollution-related crimes, all of which pose serious threats to biodiversity, ecosystems, and environmental sustainability.

In light of these challenges, a critical question arises: How does INTERPOL contribute to combating environmental crime on a global scale? This main question gives rise to the following sub-questions: What is meant by environmental crime, and what are its main forms and characteristics? What mechanisms and initiatives has INTERPOL developed to combat environmental crime?

The objective of this paper is to examine the concept of environmental crime, including its main elements, characteristics, and forms, and to analyze the role of INTERPOL in combating such crimes. It also seeks to highlight INTERPOL's main initiatives and international cooperation mechanisms, and to assess their contribution to strengthening international efforts to prevent and combat environmental crime.

To address these questions, the paper adopts a descriptive-analytical approach. The descriptive approach is used to examine the concept, main forms, and characteristics of environmental crime, as well as to present INTERPOL's principal initiatives in this field, while the analytical approach is employed to assess INTERPOL's mechanisms of international cooperation and their contribution to combating environmental crime. Accordingly, the paper is divided into two sections: the first examines the conceptual framework of environmental crime, while the second analyzes INTERPOL's practical framework for combating it.

Section I- Conceptual Framework of Environmental Crime

This section examines the definition of environmental crime, including its legal definition, explores the essential elements (or pillars) of such offenses, outlines their key characteristics, and presents the various acts recognized by international organizations as environmental crimes.

Subsection 1- What is Environmental Crime?

Understanding environmental crime requires considering its definitions, broad, narrow, and legal, as well as its core elements or pillars, which demonstrate the human behaviors and actions that cause harm to the environment.

First -Definition of Environmental Crime:

According to the literature review, environmental crime can be defined in either a narrow or broad sense. The narrow definition is legalistic, referring specifically to acts that are prohibited and criminalized, such as illegal wildlife trafficking, pollution offenses, or the trading and transportation of banned chemicals. In contrast, the broader definition includes harmful behaviors that may not be formally criminalized. From this perspective, environmental crime is understood in terms of the harm it causes, regardless of whether the actions are illegal. The term "harm" refers to the negative impacts on the environment resulting from a variety of acts and activities, including criminal ones. Environmental crime occurs whenever the environment is harmed by an action, irrespective of its legal, illegal, or unregulated nature. Such harm arises when humans, as well as plant and animal species, are negatively affected by individuals exploiting the environment for their personal gain.[1]

Building on this distinction, environmental crime can also be defined as any behavior or conduct that negatively impacts or degrades the environment, whether or not it is recognized as unlawful or subject to legal penalties. From a legal perspective, however, environmental crime refers specifically to acts or omissions that are punishable under the law. Yet, under current environmental criminal law, many serious environmental harms remain uncriminalized and are primarily treated as violations of relevant legislation.[2]

Furthermore, from a strictly legal standpoint, environmental crimes are harms committed against the environment that violate statutory provisions i.e., established laws. Philosophers and scholars, however, may broaden this concept to include environmental harms that are not explicitly covered by legal norms. This divergence in definitions of environmental crime creates specific challenges for various groups, including industry leaders, environmentalists, criminologists, and politicians. In this regard, environmental crime can be understood as any act, or attempted act, against the environment that breaches legally established provisions.[3]

In other words, environmental crimes are actions that compromise ecological safety and constitute serious violations of environmental laws. Therefore, combating these crimes requires the use of all possible methods and means to prevent and address such

offenses, with law enforcement agencies playing a critical role in identifying, investigating, and prosecuting offenders.[4]

Second- Elements of Environmental Crime:

An act can be classified as an environmental crime only if it encompasses three core elements, which serve as the foundational criteria for its identification:

A. Legal element:

The legal element of a crime is defined as the legal text that identifies the act constituting the crime and specifies the corresponding punishment imposed on its perpetrator. This definition is grounded in the legal principle "there is no crime and no punishment without a law" (*nullum crimen, nulla poena sine lege*), which means that the offender can only be punished if a legal text exists; in its absence, no crime is considered to have occurred. By default, all actions are presumed permissible unless explicitly prohibited, and the applicable penalty may be outlined in the penal code or in complementary legislation. Jurists have debated whether the legal element constitutes a distinct pillar of crime, among them, several French scholars, including Stefani, Levasseur, Bouloc, and Soyer, have argued that the legal text is indeed an essential element, asserting that a crime cannot exist and its elements are incomplete without this legal basis.[5]

B. Material Element (actus reus):

The material element of a crime legally refers to any human behavior that results in a consequence punishable under criminal law. In other words, it encompasses the tangible, observable aspects of an act that can be perceived by the senses, including specific activities or behaviors that harm or jeopardize rights and interests deemed worthy of criminal protection. From this perspective, a crime can be defined through its material element as the act or omission for which the law prescribes a specific penalty. Importantly, such an act or omission is not punishable unless the legislator explicitly provides for its criminalization. In essence, it is behavior that violates the orders and prohibitions of the Penal Code, provided that this law expressly stipulates the criminalization of such behavior.[6]

C. Moral element (mens rea):

The formation of a crime does not rely solely on the commission of a material act punishable by law; it must also arise from the will of the offender, which constitutes the moral element or pillar. This element reflects the relationship between the material act and the actor, emphasizing the necessity of a psychological link between the criminal activity—i.e., the act and its consequences—and the actor who committed it, this psychological link is commonly referred to as the moral element. Therefore, for a crime to achieve its full legal structure, it must include either intentional or unintentional wrongdoing in human behavior, thereby establishing the actor's criminal liability. [7]

Subsection 2- Characteristics and Types of Environmental Crime:

Environmental crimes can be better understood by examining their key characteristics and the various recognized types, which helps clarify how these offenses manifest and impact the environment.

First- Characteristics of Environmental Crime:

Environmental crime possesses distinct characteristics, some of which it shares with other forms of crime, while others are unique to this category. The most important of these characteristics are as follows:[8]

a. Difficulty of Defining the Scope of Environmental Crimes:

One of the main challenges in defining environmental crimes lies in identifying their elements or pillars due to the diversity of their forms. Environmental offenses may take the form of dangerous crimes, which pose a threat to legally protected interests, or harmful crimes, which cause actual damage to such interests. This complexity stems from the multiplicity of environmental components and the various ways in which human activity can affect them.

b. Difficulty in Detecting Environmental Crimes:

This type of crime is often difficult to detect without specialized equipment, such as devices that measure air pollution levels. For instance, the harmful effects of emissions from factory chimneys or cement plants on workers or nearby residents can only be identified through such monitoring devices.

c. Difficulty in Proving the Consequences of Environmental Crimes:

Proving the consequences of environmental crimes is often challenging, as some effects may take a long time to emerge. These consequences can be classified temporally, occurring either immediately or after a delay, and spatially, as they may arise in a specific place, across multiple areas, or even extend beyond the national borders. Consequently, identifying or limiting the victims is often difficult, given their abundance and diversity due to the wide range of environmental components subject to these crimes. Furthermore, when such offenses occur in densely populated areas, assessing the harm and determining accountability becomes even more complex.

d. Based on the Principle of Presumed Fault:

Most environmental crimes are considered violations, and due to their frequent occurrence and the difficulty of proving the moral element, many offenders may evade punishment. To address this, the principle of presumed fault was introduced, emphasizing that the act must be voluntary, regardless of whether it constitutes actual fault, given the importance and social value of the protected interest. In English criminal jurisprudence, such offenses are referred to as strict liability crimes, where the perpetrator may be punished even if intent cannot be established or negligence cannot be proven. In this context, crimes based on presumed fault are sometimes treated as a form of environmental crime with respect to their moral element, where the fault is integrated with the material facts and inferred from the mere occurrence of the act itself.

Second-Types of Environmental Crime:

According to the Environmental Investigation Agency (2008), five broad categories of offenses have been recognized as environmental crimes by several international organizations, including the European Union, Interpol, and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). These categories are as follows: [9]

A) Illegal Trade in Wildlife:

This category encompasses activities that violate the 1973 Washington Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES), which regulates international trade in endangered species of animals and plants to ensure their protection and survival.

B) Illegal Trade in Ozone-Depleting Substances (ODS):

This type of offense involves activities conducted in violation of the 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, which aims to regulate and phase out substances that damage the ozone layer.

C) Dumping and Illegal Transport of Various Kinds of Hazardous Wastes:

This category includes activities that violate the 1989 Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and Other Wastes and their Disposal, which governs the cross-border movement and disposal of hazardous and other wastes.

D) Illegal, Unregulated, and Unreported (IUU) Fishing:

This type of offense refers to activities carried out in breach of regulatory measures established by various Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs).

E) Illegal Logging and Trade in Timber:

This category covers the harvesting, transportation, purchase, or sale of timber in violation of national laws. Currently, there are no binding international regulations governing the international timber trade, except for endangered species, which are protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Section II- NTERPOL's Practical Framework for Combating Environmental Crimes

This section provides an overview of the practical framework through which INTERPOL supports international law enforcement in detecting, investigating, and preventing environmental offenses across borders. It defines INTERPOL, outlines its objectives and organizational structure, and highlights its main efforts in combating environmental crimes worldwide.

Subsection 1- What is INTERPOL?

INTERPOL, or International Criminal Police Organization, is the oldest and largest international police organization, comprising 196 (2023) member countries.

Established in 1923, its primary mission is to facilitate cross-border police collaboration and to support all organizations, authorities, and services in preventing and combating international crime. INTERPOL identifies five priority crime areas that significantly impact public safety and global security: drugs and criminal organizations, financial and high-tech crime, fugitives, terrorism, and human trafficking. [10]

First- INTERPOL's Objectives:

According to article 2 of its constitution, INTERPOL's primary objectives are:[11]

A) To ensure and promote the widest possible mutual assistance among all criminal police authorities, within the limits of the national laws of the different countries and in accordance with the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

B) To establish and develop all institutions and mechanisms that effectively contribute to the prevention and suppression of ordinary law crimes.

Second- INTERPOL's Organs:

INTERPOL is structured around six main organs: the General Assembly, the Executive Committee, the General Secretariat, the National Central Bureaus, the Advisers, and the Commission for the Control of Files.

a. General Assembly:

The INTERPOL's General Assembly is the supreme governing body, composed of delegates appointed by its member countries. It is responsible for carrying out the duties prescribed in the Constitution, establishing principles and general measures to achieve the objectives of the Organization, examining and approving the general program of activities prepared by the Secretary General for the upcoming year, determining any additional regulations deemed necessary, electing officials to perform functions outlined in the Constitution, adopting resolutions and making recommendations to member countries on matters within the Organization's competence, and determining the financial policy of the Organization.[12]

b. Executive Committee:

The INTERPOL's Executive Committee consists of the President of the Organization, three Vice Presidents, and nine Delegates. It is charged with supervising the execution of the decisions of the General Assembly, preparing the agenda for its sessions, and submitting to the Assembly any programs or projects considered useful. The committee also oversees the administration and work of the Secretary General and exercises the powers delegated to it by the General Assembly.[13]

c. General Secretariat:

It comprises INTERPOL's permanent departments and is responsible for a range of essential functions. These include implementing the decisions of the General Assembly and the Executive Committee, serving as an international center in the fight against ordinary crime, acting as a technical and information hub, and ensuring the efficient administration of the Organization. The Secretariat also maintains contact with national and international authorities through the National Central Bureaus, produces publications

regarded as useful, organizes and performs secretariat work for sessions of the General Assembly, the Executive Committee, and any other bodies of the Organization, prepares the draft program of work for the coming year for the consideration and approval of the General Assembly and the Executive Committee, and maintains, as far as is possible, direct and constant contact with the President of the Organization.[14]

d. National Central Bureaus:

In order to achieve its objectives, INTERPOL relies on continuous and active cooperation of its member countries, which are expected to participate fully in its activities while remaining compliant with their national laws. Each country is required to appoint a body to serve as the National Central Bureau (NCB) to facilitate this collaboration. The NCB is responsible for maintaining contact with the various departments in the country, the bodies in other countries serving as National Central Bureaus, and the Organization's General Secretariat.[15]

e. Advisers:

The INTERPOL may consult advisers on scientific matters, whose role is strictly advisory.[16]

f. Commission for the Control of Files:

It is an independent body tasked with ensuring that INTERPOL's processing of personal data complies with its established regulations. The commission provides guidance and advice on any project, operation, rule, or other matter involving the handling of personal data. It also manages requests related to data contained in the Organization's files.[17]

Subsection 2- INTERPOL's Role in Combating Environmental Crimes:

INTERPOL combats environmental crimes through a variety of projects and initiatives designed to address the wide range of offenses affecting the environment worldwide.

First- INTERPOL's Environmental Crime Committee* (1992):

With 195 member countries, INTERPOL has been actively combating environmental crimes since 1976. In 1992, it established the Environmental Crimes Committee, which comprises specialized working groups focused on wildlife crime, pollution crime, and fisheries crime,[18] in addition to forestry crime.

A) Fisheries Crime Working Group:

It serves as an international platform for exchanging knowledge and experience, as well as developing new policing strategies to address fisheries-related offenses. The group collaborates with fisheries and tax authorities, customs, police, navies, and coast guards, in addition to the private sector and non-governmental organizations, to coordinate operations aimed at dismantling criminal networks involved in such crimes. Furthermore, INTERPOL supports member countries in gathering and analyzing intelligence and facilitates the exchange of information within the international fisheries enforcement community.

B) Forestry Crime Working Group:

It is composed of a group of professionals who provide strategic advice and guidance to enhance the effectiveness of forestry law enforcement activities. Among its notable initiatives are Operation Amazonas II (2015) and Operation Log (2015). The group develops rules and procedures and provides training to a wide range of actors, including government agencies and forest-dependent rural communities, to strengthen the enforcement of forestry-related laws.

C) Pollution Crime Working Group:

It is a global network of national experts that meet annually to discuss member countries' priority operational strategies and share expertise in pollution law enforcement. The group supports INTERPOL's Environmental Security Program in developing a global response to pollution-related crimes. Its contributions, including guidance on enforcement strategies, operations, investigative manuals, and training activities, are facilitated by an executive board, which remains active throughout the year.

D) Wildlife Crime Working Group:

This working group consists of wildlife professionals and develops strategies to enhance law enforcement efforts against wildlife crimes on a global scale. The group conducts operations aimed at apprehending offenders, seizing poached items, and dismantling organized crime networks. To maximize the global impact of its initiatives and operations, the group collaborates with major actors in animal conservation and law enforcement. [19]

Second- INTEPOL's Project Wisdom (2008):

Project Wisdom focuses on combating illegal ivory trafficking and promoting elephant conservation. This project calls on countries to establish national environmental task forces, which are connected regionally and internationally through Interpol's national central bureaus. Its main goal is to coordinate high-level international efforts by strengthening political will, translating it into institutional support, and equipping officers with the necessary training skills.

To support the conservation of elephants and rhinoceros, these task forces promote the use of modern intelligence-led enforcement practices. This project also aims to encourage communication, cooperation, and collaboration in intelligence sharing, cross-border investigations, and better training. These efforts contribute to the effective apprehension of criminals and organized groups, while also fostering a comprehensive global understanding of criminal activities affecting elephant and rhinoceros conservation.

Since its foundation, the project has recorded numerous achievements. Four major operations, Baba, Costa, Mogatle, and Ahmed, have led to the arrest of 252 individuals, with a conviction rate exceeding 80%. In addition, tens of thousands of carved ivory items and approximately three tons of raw ivory have been seized. [20]

Third- INTERPOL's Environmental Crime Program (2009):

INTERPOL has taken significant steps to establish an effective international strategy to combat widespread wildlife-related criminal activities. In 2009, Interpol launched its environmental crime program, which primarily aims to coordinate global and regional operations to dismantle criminal networks involved in environmental crime through intelligence-driven policing.

The program also focuses on developing and promoting international law enforcement best practices, including manuals, guides, and other resources. In addition, it seeks to enhance the capacity of environmental law enforcement agencies by strengthening their access to Interpol services, particularly through closer cooperation with Interpol national central bureaus. Furthermore, it works in collaboration with the environmental crime committee to shape the program's strategy and direction.[21]

Since its establishment, the program has developed a range of specialized projects targeting key areas of environmental crime, including the illegal trade and dumping hazardous waste, illegal fishing, wildlife crime —such as poaching and the illegal trafficking of protected species, notably rhinoceros, elephants, and Asian big cats —as well as forest- related crimes. [22]

Fourth- INTERPOL's Cooperation with Secretariat* of Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions:

The mission of the INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme is to support member countries in the effective enforcement of national and international environmental laws and treaties. In this context, INTERPOL cooperates with the Secretariat of Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in activities aimed at preventing and combating the illegal trafficking of hazardous chemicals and wastes under these conventions. The areas of cooperation include, inter alia:[23]

- The Green Customs Initiative* and other existing enforcement networks;
- The development of a joint e-learning module *for law enforcement officers on hazardous chemicals and wastes under the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions;
- INTERPOL's participation as an observer in the Environmental Network for Optimizing Regulatory Compliance on Illegal Traffic (ENFORCE), established at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Basel Convention. ENFORCE aims to enhance countries' compliance with the Basel Convention obligations by strengthening the implementation and enforcement of national laws to prevent and combat illegal traffic in hazardous wastes and other wastes, through a network of relevant experts.

Fifth- INTERPOL's Environmental Security Program (2010):

INTERPOL established a dedicated Environmental Security Programme (ENS) in 2010. The ENS supports countries in addressing various forms of pollution-related crime, including fuel, oil, and gas smuggling, waste crime, marine pollution crime, the illegal use and trade of chemicals, and carbon trading fraud.

Since its foundation, the ENS has successfully coordinated numerous transnational operations and supported member countries in investigations over the past decade, resulting in significant outcomes, including:[24]

- More than 3,000 arrests for environmental crime offences, including pollution-related crimes, as well as the detection of hundreds of cases involving the illegal use and trade of chemicals, fuel, oil and gas smuggling, carbon trading crime, and illegal mining, thereby triggering further investigations;
- The detection of almost 6,000 cases of marine pollution, including discharges at sea, in rivers or in coastal areas, as well as waste trafficking;
- The organization of regular capacity-building events, aimed at strengthening law enforcement skills in preventing, detecting and disrupting of organized pollution crime;
- The identification of links connecting pollution crime with other serious offences, particularly fraud, corruption, tax evasion, money laundering;
- The coordination of multiple global law enforcement operations aimed at collecting intelligence, identifying trends and risk indicators, and initiating intelligence-led investigations worldwide.
- The publication of hundreds of INTERPOL Notices* including more than 30 Red Notices and Blue Notices related to pollution crime, which are currently active.

Sixth- INTERPOL's LEAF Project (2012):

Interpol launched the LEAF or Law Enforcement Assistance for Forests project on World Environment Day, June 5, 2012. The project is a comprehensive initiative dedicated to addressing all aspects of forest crime and represents a collaboration between INTERPOL's environmental crime program and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) centre in Norway.

The project aims to provide a coordinated international response to the growing involvement of organized crime in illegal logging and transnational trafficking of illegal timber. INTERPOL is well positioned to facilitate cooperation among stakeholders and to strengthen forest law enforcement through capacity building and training, the exchange of regional and international intelligence, the coordination of collaborative operations, and the dissemination of best practices.

Through this initiative, INTERPOL supports its member countries in strengthening forest governance and developing effective enforcement frameworks to combat illegal logging and corruption within the forest sector. In doing so, Project LEAF contributes to both national and international climate initiatives aimed at reducing greenhouse emissions, such as REDD+*, by promoting sustainable forest management practices and enhancing forest protection. [25]

Seventh- INTERPOL's Project GAIA (2024):

To combat illegal mining and related environmental crime, INTERPOL launched this project in 2024, with the goal of strengthening law enforcement and international cooperation. The project supports capacity building, intelligence sharing, and cross-border investigations, while also contributing to regional initiatives such as the Clean Gold

Programme, led by the Brazilian Federal Police, which targets illegal gold mining and illicit supply chains in Central and South America.

Since its inception, INTERPOL has conducted operations targeting illegal mining and related crimes across Africa, including Operation Aurum (2023) and Operation Sanu (2024). These efforts have resulted in hundreds of arrests, the seizure of toxic chemicals and equipment, and the dismantling of criminal networks involved in deforestation, water pollution, and human exploitation. Additionally, the INTERPOL report *Illegal Mining and Associated Crimes* (2022) provides guidance for law enforcement by identifying key actors, methods, and transnational links.[26]

Conclusion:

INTERPOL, or International Criminal Police Organization, plays an active role in combating a wide range of crimes across the world. With 196 member countries, INTERPOL has been engaged in addressing various forms of environmental crimes since 1976. Among its key initiatives:

- Environmental Crimes Committee (1992), which comprises specialized working groups focusing on wildlife, pollution, fisheries, and forestry crimes.
- Project Wisdom (2008), targeting illegal ivory trafficking and elephant conservation;
- Environmental Crime Program (2009), designed to assist member countries in the effective enforcement of national and international environmental laws.

Under this program, Interpol has cooperated with the Secretariat of Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm conventions to prevent and combat the illegal traffic in hazardous chemicals and wastes;

- Project LEAF (2012), which addresses all facets of forest- related crime;
- Environmental Security Program (ENS), which supports member countries in tackling various forms of pollution-related crime.
- Project GAIA (2024), which aims to combat illegal mining, also supports biodiversity conservation and climate protection.

Collectively, these initiatives demonstrate INTERPOL's comprehensive approach to environmental law enforcement, combining international cooperation, intelligence-led operations, capacity building, and legal support to combat environmental crime effectively.

The findings of this study show that INTERPOL has developed an important role in strengthening international cooperation and enhancing the ability of member countries to respond to the transnational nature of environmental crime. However, the effectiveness of its initiatives largely depends on the cooperation and enforcement capacities of member countries.

Therefore, further strengthening information sharing, technical assistance, capacity building, and joint operations is recommended. In addition, closer cooperation between INTERPOL, national law-enforcement authorities, environmental agencies, and relevant international organizations would contribute to more effective prevention, investigation, and prosecution of environmental crimes.

Bibliography:

[1] - *Anja P. Jakobi: Crime, Security and Global Politics: An Introduction to Global Crime Governance, Red Globe Press, UK, 2020, P. 170.*

[2] - *Valsamis Mitsilegas et al: Research Handbook on Transnational Crime, Edward Elgar Publishing Limit, UK, 2019, P. 143.*

[3] - *J. Mitchell Miller: 21st Century Criminology: A Reference Handbook, Sage Publication, Volume 1, California, 2009, P.482.*

[4] - *Charles B. Fields et al: Understanding and Managing Threats to the Environment in South Eastern Europe, Springer Science & Business Media, The Netherlands, 2011, P.124.*

[5] - *Mohamed Rafeeq Bakay: Environmental Crime, Journal of Real Estate Law and Environment, Volume 7, Issue 13, June 2019, P. 171.*

[6] - *Farid Magani: Combating Environmental Crimes in The Algerian Legislation and Comparative Laws, Algerian Journal of Legal and Political Sciences, Volume 58, Issue 04, 2021, PP.58- 59.*

[7] - *Ibid, P.59.*

[8] - *Ben Youssef Al-Qunaei: Environmental Crime in Algerian Criminal Law, The Voice of Law Review, Volume Five, Issue 10, April 2018, PP. 388-390.*

[9] - *Debbie Banks et al. Environmental Crime A threat to our future, Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), Emmerson Press, 2008, P.2.*

[10] - *Peter G. Stone, Joanne Farchakh Bajjaly: The Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Iraq, Boydell & Brewer Ltd, UK, 2008, P.60.*

[11] - *Article 2, INTERPOL: Constitution of the ICPO-INTERPOL, Link: https://www.interpol.int/Who-we-are/Legal-framework/Legal-documents, Accessed: 25/3/2026.*

[12] - *Articles: 6-8.*

[13] - *Articles: 15-22.*

[14] - *Articles: 25-26.*

[15] - *Articles: 31-32.*

[16] - *Article 34.*

[17] - *Article 36.*

[*] *In 2014, INTERPOL's Environmental Crime Committee evolved into the Environment Compliance Committee.*

[18] - *Ricardo Pereira: Environmental Criminal Liability and Enforcement in European and International Law, Brill Nijhoff, Boston, 2015, P.237.*

[19] - *INTEERPOL: https://www.interpol.int/Crimes/Environmental-crime, Accessed: 23/1/2022.*

[20] - *Bruce Zagaris: International White Collar Crime: Cases and Materials, 2nd edition, Cambridge University Press, USA, 2015, P. 629.*

[21] - *Ibid, p. 629.*

[22] - *Valsamis Mitsilegas et al: Op Cit, P.178.*

[*] *The Secretariat of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions are located in Geneva, Switzerland, and are administered by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The Rotterdam Convention's Secretariat is shared by UNEP and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Its headquarters are in Geneva, Switzerland, and in Rome, Italy.*

[*] *Basel Convention (1989) on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.*

[*] *Rotterdam Convention (signed in 1998, entered into force in 2004) on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade.*

[*] *Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (signed in 2001, entered into force 2004)*

[23] *-Secretariat of The Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions: Accessed: 28/3/2026.in: http://www.brsmeas.org/Partners/IGOs/Interpol/tabid/4093/language/en-US/Default.aspx,*

[*] *A cooperation to improve customs and other border control officers' ability to monitor and facilitate lawful commerce while also detecting and preventing illegal trade in environmentally sensitive goods covered by trade related conventions and multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs)*

[*] *INTERPOL and the Secretariat have developed e-learning program on hazardous chemicals and wastes under the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions for law enforcement officers. This tool will assist them in fulfilling their obligations to protect their countries, peoples, and the global community from the dangers of hazardous chemicals and wastes as a result of the uncontrolled international trade of chemicals and wastes.*

[24] *- INTERPOL: https://www.interpol.int/en/News-and-Events/News/2020/Pollution-crime-a-decade-of-changing-mindsets, Accessed: 23/3/2026.*

[*] *Notices: Environmental crimes can be reported through INTERPOL notices, which can be used to notify member countries and share information. INTERPOL uses Red Notices to track down wanted environmental criminals, Blue Notices to gather information on suspects, Purple Notices to learn more about their methods, and Green Notices to issue warnings and intelligence about environmental criminals who are likely to repeat their crimes in other countries.*

[*] *REDD+ Stands for countries' efforts to minimize emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, as well as to promote forest conservation, sustainable management, and carbon stock improvement.*

[25] *- Davyth Stewart: Chapter 14: Project LEAF and ITERPOL's Work on Illegal Logging and Forest Crime: Environmental Crime and its Victims: Perspectives within Green Criminology, Routledge, USA, 2016, PP. 1-2.*

[26] *- INTERPOL: Illegal Mining, Link: https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Environmental-crime/Illegal-mining, Accessed: 31/3/2026.*