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NOTE

From:	Presidency
To:	Working Party on General Matters, including evaluations (GENVAL)
No. prev. doc.:	7752/17
Subject:	Eighth round of mutual evaluations - Questionnaire

In line with Article 2 of the Joint Action 97/827/JHA of 5 December 1997, the Working Party on General Matters including Evaluations (GENVAL), at its meeting of 14 December 2016, decided that the eighth round of mutual evaluations will be devoted to the practical implementation and operation of the European policies on preventing and combating environmental crime.

In accordance with Article 191 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the European Union should aim at achieving a high level of protection of the environment. The EU policy should focus upon the precautionary and preventive aspects, whilst ensuring that the environmental damage is rectified at source, and that the perpetrator is sanctioned for his/her illegal acts.

In the SOCTA 2017, Europol refers to Environmental Crime under two aspects: illicit waste trafficking, putting the emphasis on the document fraud, and trafficking of endangered species, underlining that the EU is a transit region.

Environmental crime is often perceived as ‘victimless’ crime, because the damage caused is not directly visible and it usually emerges after some time. Nonetheless, the damage caused is irreparable and it may cause diseases/deaths, environmental disasters, reduced life expectancy, contamination of the food chain and irreversible climate change.¹ Despite the potentially serious consequences of such crime, its seriousness is still not fully taken into consideration. Recent trends show that the main motive for committing environmental crimes is to gain illicit profits. Such profits could be equivalent to the profits made out of illegal drugs trafficking. Given the low penalties of environmental crimes and their low detection, these crimes are attracting greater interest of organised criminal groups (OCG). OCGs are involved in the illicit trade as traffickers, intermediaries and facilitators². Furthermore, environmental crime appears to be linked to other forms of crime, such as money laundering, fraud, forgery, corruption and terrorism. These offences are increasingly extending beyond the borders of the States in which the offences are committed.

The Council Conclusions on Countering Environmental Crime of December 2016³ recognise that combating environmental crime requires a specialisation of the law enforcement and judicial authorities and a comprehensive multidisciplinary approach at all levels, better cooperation and exchange of information between the competent authorities and with third countries, and the need to enhance dialogue and cooperation with relevant international organisations.

¹ Environmental Crime Network Report on Environmental Crime, (The Hague May 2016)

² Doc. 16605/14

³ Doc. 15412/16

During the discussions held by the Slovak Presidency regarding the ‘choice of topic’ for the eighth evaluation round, Member States supported the topic ‘environmental crime’. Some delegations underlined that, since environmental crime covers a broad range of offences which wilfully or purposefully damage the environment, it is important that the eighth evaluation round is restricted to specific offences. In view of this, the proposal of the Slovak Presidency (doc. 15196/16) was to limit environmental crime to the two aspects, listed hereunder, which were agreed by the GENVAL Working Party:

- Illegal Trafficking in Waste: Organised criminal groups and waste management companies traffic various types of waste, such as household waste, toxic and hazardous waste, e-waste and end-of-life vehicles, including lead-acid batteries. The traffic of illegal waste has as main destinations in Africa and Asia, with EU countries reporting an increase in illegal dumping or disposal.⁴ This problem came to the fore of public attention when a ship Probo Koala dumped waste in Ivory Coast in 2006, in which the dumping of hazardous waste led to the death and poisoning of several individuals.
- Illegal Production or Handling of Dangerous Materials: This includes chemical, biological, radioactive and nuclear materials that, in addition to causing pollution of the environment and significant threats to human health, may have links with other criminal activities, including terrorism.

The Commission and some delegations would like to extend the scope of the evaluation to wildlife trafficking. The Presidency considers all of the offences that fall within the parameters of ‘environmental crime’ to be equally important and recognises that wildlife trafficking has become a major criminal phenomenon. However, the Presidency believes that such topic could be addressed in its own right, with a possible separate evaluation. If wildlife trafficking would be included as a third topic in the eighth evaluation round, its extended scope would not be in line with the decision already taken by the Working Party for the abovementioned reasons, involving the risk that this topic would be treated in a very superfluous manner. Additionally this could complicate the evaluation process, as different national authorities could be involved in the three sub-topics.

⁴ SOCTA 2013

For the purpose of preparing the mutual evaluation, the Presidency submitted a preliminary version of the draft questionnaire, as foreseen in Article 5 of Joint Action 97/827/JHA, together, with some guidelines and a table regarding the terminology used in the questionnaire, as set out in the Annex to doc. 5406/17, to the GENVAL Working Party at its meeting on 3 February 2017 and a revised version of the draft questionnaire, as set out in the Annex to doc. 7752/17, to the GENVAL Working Party at its meeting on 7 April 2017.

Following discussions at the above meetings and written comments received by some delegations, the Presidency has revised further the draft questionnaire, as set out in the Annex to this document.

At the GENVAL meeting of 5 May 2017, the Presidency invites delegations to agree on the final version of the questionnaire, as set out in the Annex.

**When answering the questionnaire, delegations are invited to observe
the following guidelines:**

- one single completed questionnaire per MS combining the contributions of all appropriate authorities should be returned;
- organisation charts or alternatively brief description of the competences and the place within the national system of the respective judicial, Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) and other authorities that participated in completing the questionnaire, should be provided.
- practitioners (judicial and LEAs), as well as technical experts should be consulted as much possible, especially where a detail of practical expertise is sought;
- answering simply by "yes" or "no" should be avoided as far as possible;
- supporting information, including examples, both positive and negative, which may assist the evaluation team in its work should be provided, as appropriate;
- personal data relating to individual cases where specific examples are required should not be provided.

It should be noted that in accordance with Article 9 of the Joint Action 97/827/JHA of 5 December 1997, the experts of the evaluation teams are required to respect the confidentiality of the information they receive in connection with their task.

In case you have any questions related to this questionnaire or to the evaluation process in itself, please do not hesitate to contact the General Secretariat of the Council
(secretariat.mutual-evaluation@consilium.europa.eu (functional mailbox)).

For the purposes of the questionnaire the following terms are used:

<p>“waste”</p>	<p>According to Article 3(1) of Directive 2008/98/EC on waste, "waste" means any substance or object which the holder discards or intends or is required to discard – Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC)</p>
<p>"hazardous waste"</p>	<p>According to Article 3(2) of Directive 2008/98/EC on hazardous waste, "hazardous waste" means waste which displays one or more of the hazardous properties listed in Commission Regulation (EU) 1357/2014 (replacing Annex III of Directive 2009/98/EC)</p>
<p>“shipment ”</p>	<p>According to Article 2 (34) of Regulation (EC) 1013/2006 on shipments of waste, "shipment" means the transport of waste destined for recovery or disposal which is planned or takes place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) between a country and another country; or (b) between a country and overseas countries and territories or other areas, under that country's protection; or (c) between a country and any land area which is not part of any country under international law; or (d) between a country and the Antarctic; or (e) from one country through any of the areas referred to above; or (f) within a country through any of the areas referred to above and which originates in and ends in the same country; or (g) from a geographic area not under the jurisdiction of any country, to a country;

<p>"illegal shipment of waste"</p>	<p>According to Article 2(35) of Regulation (EC) 1013/2006 on shipments of waste, "illegal shipment" means any shipment of waste effected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) without notification to all competent authorities concerned pursuant to this Regulation; or (b) without the consent of the competent authorities concerned pursuant to this Regulation; or (c) with consent obtained from the competent authorities concerned through falsification, misrepresentation or fraud; or (d) in a way which is not specified materially in the notification or movement documents; or (e) in a way which results in recovery or disposal in contravention of Community or international rules; or (f) contrary to Articles 34, 36, 39, 40, 41 and 43; or (g) which, in relation to shipments of waste as referred to in Article 3(2) and (4), has resulted from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the waste being discovered not to be listed in Annexes III, IIIA or IIIB, or (ii) non-compliance with Article 3(4), (iii) the shipment being effected in a way which is not specified materially in the document set out in Annex VII.
<p>"e-waste" (or WEEE)</p>	<p>According to Article 3(1) (e) of Directive 2012/19/EU, "waste electrical and electronic equipment" or "WEEE" means electrical or electronic equipment which is waste within the meaning of Article 3(1) of Directive 2008/98/EC, including all components, sub-assemblies and consumables which are part of the product at the time of discarding.</p>

<p>"Waste crime"</p>	<p>For the purpose of this questionnaire, waste crime is limited to the following criminal offences listed in Article 3 (b) and (c) of Directive 2008/99/EC, when unlawful according to Article 2:</p> <p>(b) the collection, transport, recovery or disposal of waste, including the supervision of such operations and the after-care of disposal sites, and including action taken as a dealer or a broker (waste management), which causes or is likely to cause death or serious injury to any person or substantial damage to the quality of air, the quality of soil or the quality of water, or to animals or plants;</p> <p>(c) the shipment of waste, where this activity falls within the scope of Article 2(35) of Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 June 2006 on shipments of waste and is undertaken in a non-negligible quantity, whether executed in a single shipment or in several shipments which appear to be linked.</p>
<p>"Inspections"</p>	<p>Reference is being specifically made to Article 34 of Directive 2008/98/EC (Waste Framework Directive)</p> <p>(1) Establishments or undertakings which carry out waste treatment operations, establishments or undertakings which collect or transport waste on a professional basis, brokers and dealers, and establishments or undertakings which produce hazardous waste shall be subject to appropriate periodic inspections by the competent authorities.</p> <p>(2) Inspections concerning collection and transport operations shall cover the origin, nature, quantity and destination of the waste collected and transported.</p> <p>(3) Member States may take account of registrations obtained under the Community Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS), in particular regarding the frequency and intensity of inspections.</p>

Reference is also made to Article 50 of Regulation 1013/2006 (Shipments of Waste Regulation)

(2) Member States shall, by way of measures for the enforcement of this Regulation, provide, inter alia, for inspections of establishments and undertakings in accordance with Article 13 of Directive 2006/12/EC, and for spot checks on shipments of waste or on the related recovery or disposal

(3) Checks on shipments may take place in particular:

(a) at the point of origin, carried out with the producer, holder or notifier;

(b) at the destination, carried out with the consignee or the facility;

(c) at the frontiers of the Community; and/or (d) during the shipment within the Community.

(4) Checks on shipments shall include the inspection of documents, the confirmation of identity and, where appropriate, physical checking of the waste.

(5) Member States shall cooperate, bilaterally or multilaterally, with one another in order to facilitate the prevention and detection of illegal shipments.

(6) Member States shall identify those members of their permanent staff responsible for the cooperation referred to in paragraph 5 and identify the focal point(s) for the physical checks referred to in paragraph 4. The information shall be sent to the Commission which shall distribute a compiled list to the correspondents referred to in Article 54.

(7) At the request of another Member State, a Member State may take enforcement action against persons suspected of being engaged in the illegal shipment of waste who are present in that Member State.

<p>"Illegal production or handling of dangerous materials "</p>	<p>For the purpose of this questionnaire, as regards the "Illegal production or handling of dangerous materials", reference is made to Article 3 a), d) and e) of Directive 2008/99/EC:</p> <p>a) the discharge, emission or introduction of a quantity of materials or ionising radiation into air, soil or water, which causes or is likely to cause death or serious injury to any person or substantial damage to the quality of air, the quality of soil or the quality of water, or to animals or plants;</p> <p>(d) the operation of a plant in which a dangerous activity is carried out or in which dangerous substances or preparations are stored or used and which, outside the plant, causes or is likely to cause death or serious injury to any person or substantial damage to the quality of air, the quality of soil or the quality of water, or to animals or plants;</p> <p>(e) the production, processing, handling, use, holding, storage, transport, import, export or disposal of nuclear materials or other hazardous radioactive substances which causes or is likely to cause death or serious injury to any person or substantial damage to the quality of air, the quality of soil or the quality of water, or to animals or plants.</p>
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QUESTIONNAIRE

8th round of Mutual Evaluations

The practical implementation and operation of European policies on preventing and combating Environmental Crime

I - General Matters

For the purpose of this questionnaire, waste crime will refer to the offences listed in Article 3(b) and (c) of the Environmental Crime Directive (Directive 2008/99/EC).

1. Is there an action plan or similar strategic document against environmental crime in your Member State? If so, please provide a copy.
2. Briefly outline the national programmes/projects with regard to waste crime in your Member State, for example in the area of prevention, legislation, capacity building, training, public awareness and international cooperation.
3. How is the prevention of waste crime addressed in your national legislation/policy(ies)?
4. Are there statistics on waste crime in your Member State? If so, please describe how they are compiled: are they integrated? Are judicial statistics kept separately from the law enforcement authorities' and administrative statistics? Are statistics kept according to the 'lead crime', for example fraud, forgery etc., or is there a separate category? Are statistics published? If yes, please provide links.

5. Please specify the main trends in your Member States with regard to waste crime in the recent years, based on the number of registered cases, investigations, prosecutions and final convictions, and, if applicable, administrative sanctions, in the last 5 years. If possible, provide in % the share of waste crime in the total criminality picture in your Member State.
6. Are there dedicated national budget allocations for the prevention of and fight against waste crime? Does your Member State benefit from EU funding to tackle waste crime?
7. Have you encountered cases showing links between waste crime and other forms of serious criminal offences, such as organised crime, corporate-related offences and corruption?
8. What does your legislation provide about the role of the NGOs? Can NGOs report the crime and also be *parte civile* in the criminal proceedings?

II - Legal aspects

9. Which are the acts in your national legislation that criminalise offences within the definition of ‘waste crime’? Please indicate for each offence: (a) the title and relevant provisions in your legislation; (b); the definition and nature of the offence (criminal/administrative); (c) the minimum and maximum penalties or administrative sanctions for natural and legal persons; (d) the aggravating/mitigating factors.
10. Please indicate any other national binding or non-binding rules or judiciary instructions relevant in the area of waste crime.
11. Which are the criteria to determine the seriousness of waste crime? Are they foreseen in your national legislation? Are there sentencing guidelines and/or guidance on gravity factors to help judges in the determination of sanctions? How do they define the term ‘substantial damage’ as referred to in Article 3 of Directive 2008/99/EU?

III - National Structures

III a) Law Enforcement Authorities

12. Please describe the law enforcement structure for preventing and combating waste crime, specifying its composition and powers.
13. Does a specialised body to investigate waste crime exist in your Member State? If so, please provide details. If not, please explain which general entities/bodies are responsible for the investigation of waste crime and whether they have specialised officers.
14. How do investigative authorities in your Member State (administrative and environmental authorities, police, customs, inspectorates, prosecutors' offices) cooperate among themselves? Do you have examples of joint task forces?
15. Please describe the investigative techniques/tools used for the purpose of waste crime investigations. Do you use special investigative techniques, such as electronic surveillance, undercover operations or controlled delivery? Which ones are the most commonly used? Do you encounter any difficulties in the use of such tools?
16. Are the capabilities and equipment of the forensic units, financial units and cyber crime units used to investigate waste crime?
17. What are the main challenges or obstacles experienced in your Member State in investigating domestic and cross-border cases of waste crime?

III b) Judiciary (prosecution and court)

18. Are waste crime cases dealt with in your Member State by a general or specialised prosecution/court?
19. What measures, if any, have been taken or are planned to strengthen the capacity to prosecute and sanction waste crimes in your Member State?
20. What are the main challenges or obstacles experienced in your Member State in prosecution and sanctioning of domestic and cross-border cases that relate specifically to waste crime?

III c) Other Authorities

21. Are there other national authorities besides the law enforcement authorities and the judiciary involved in the prevention of and fight against waste crime? If so, please provide details on their structure and powers.
22. Are waste crimes dealt with in your Member State also by administrative authorities? If administrative authorities are involved, please clarify the relationship between the criminal and administrative sanctioning regime.

III d) Cooperation and exchange of information among national authorities

23. Please explain how the cooperation, exchange of information and intelligence, as well as the coordination between all various authorities with a role in the prevention of and fight against waste crime is organised in your Member State.
24. Do law enforcement and judicial authorities have adequate access to information (databases and registers)?

25. Does your Member State have a national focal point on intelligence for waste crime?
26. Do national authorities encounter practical obstacles in their cooperation?

IV – Procedural, jurisdictional and administrative issues

27. Are any difficulties encountered with regard to evidence in court and administrative proceedings?
28. Do prosecution and sanctioning occur on the basis of any defined enforcement principles, such as: (a) proportionality, deterrence and effectiveness of sanctions; (ii) "polluter pays" principle; (iii) need for cessation of illegal activities; (iv) need to achieve reduction and/or environmental remediation?
29. Which other measures can be imposed in your Member State besides criminal sanctions and administrative fines (e.g. forfeiture of illegal assets)?
30. How are seized objects dealt with? Who bears the costs of temporary storage during investigation?
31. Who is responsible for restoring the environment and repairing damages caused by the offender?
32. Does your national legislation provide for jurisdiction with regard to waste crimes committed partially/entirely outside the territory of your Member State?
33. Are there, apart from Council Framework Decision 2009/948/JHA of 30 November 2009, other mechanisms to resolve conflicts of jurisdiction with other Member States that address specifically cross-border waste crime cases in your Member State?

V - Cooperation in cross-border cases

34. Are there specific forms of cooperation in cross-border cases of waste crime and through which instruments? Please describe your practical experience.
35. Do your authorities use specific channels for the purpose of information exchange in cross-border cases of waste crime? Do you have a national contact point for such purpose?
36. Do your authorities use EU information databases in order to prevent, detect, investigate and prosecute cross-border cases of waste crime? Which databases do they use?
37. Do your authorities encounter practical problems in judicial cooperation in criminal matters relating to waste crime?
38. Have your national authorities participated in JITs in cross-border waste crime cases? Do you consider JITs to be beneficial specifically in the fight against waste crime?
39. What are, if any, your experiences with these networks - Environmental Crime Network (EnviCrimeNet), the Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of EU Environmental Law (IMPEL), the European Network of Prosecutors for the Environment (ENPE), the EU Forum of Judges for the Environment (EUFJE) - or similar networks?

VI - Cooperation with EU Agencies and Interpol

40. What is your Member State's experiences of cooperation with Europol, Eurojust, Interpol and which is of particular significance to waste crime?
41. Are the national authorities dealing with waste crime familiar with and make use of Europol products and tools such as: Environmental Crime Threat Assessment (2013), SOCTA, Early Warning Notifications, Platforms of experts available on the internet (EPEs on EnviCrimeNet and EPE on Customs Enforcement)⁵?

VII - Cooperation with the Private Sector

42. Please explain how and on what basis the private sector is involved in the prevention of and fight against waste crime, e.g. legal or policy obligations, and if Public Private Partnership (PPP) is used.
43. Is the private sector subject to any specific responsibility/liability under your national law in case of not having met an obligation to pass on information to LEAs or other competent authorities? If so, please describe.
44. Do you have any practical experiences of cooperation with the private sector? Please describe.

⁵ SOCTA is the Serious and Organized Crime Threat Assessment.
Early Warning Notifications is one of Europol's strategic products.
The Europol Platforms of experts is available on the internet (EPEs on EnviCrimeNet and EPE on Customs Enforcement), to share knowledge and best practices related to the environmental crime area-

VIII - Training

45. Is training related to environmental crime, and in particular waste crime provided to the general and specialised LEAs, the judiciary and any other authority? Does this include targeted modules on financial investigations and for IT -forensic examiners vis-a-vis environmental crime? Describe the objectives, subject matters covered, and if possible the frequency and duration of this training.
46. Which body or entity is responsible for the provision of environmental crime, and in particular waste crime related training in your Member State? Does staff dealing with environmental crime participate in training by CEPOL or any other body/agency?

IX - Illegal Trafficking of Waste

47. Which are the authorities responsible for preventing and fighting against the illegal shipment of waste between Member States, as well as to and from Member States to third countries, including authorities involved in inspecting, prosecuting and sanctioning? Which authorities are in particular responsible for inspections? Please define their role, functions, powers and level of specialisation.
48. How the illegal shipment of waste is usually detected in your Member State? (complaints, surveillance, intelligence etc.)? Which obstacles do your authorities encounter to detect offences?
49. Have you noticed any particular common modus operandi and trends in the illegal shipment of waste? Can you estimate the involvement of organised crime groups or individual perpetrators involved in serious crime?

50. Which measures are taken to ensure that imported/exported waste is managed in an environmentally sound manner throughout the period of shipment, as well as in the recovery, or disposal of waste?
51. Which instruments/methods do you use during the inspections? Are these sufficient? Do you have any best practices in this regard?
52. Do you have specific inspection activities and analysis on WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) to identify illegal flows? Which actions do you take to ensure the reporting of WEEE collected through all routes and the elimination of illegal shipment?
53. Do you have specific inspection activities and analysis on ELV (End of Life Vehicles)? If yes, how many inspections do you conduct per year? What is your experience in this regard, both in terms of cross-border shipments and of illegal treatment?
54. In accordance with Article 50 of Regulation 1013/2006, as amended by Regulation No. 660/2014, the first inspection plans need to be adopted by 1 January 2017. Please provide copy/ies of the inspection plan/s.
55. In case the inspection authorities detect irregularities, how do the authorities follow up the matter and cooperate with other authorities? Are confiscation measures applied?
56. What are the main challenges encountered with regard to the taking back of illegal waste shipment to the State of origin?

X - Management of Hazardous Waste

57. To what extent do hazardous wastes feature in those waste crimes detected within your Member State that come within the scope of Article 3(b) of Directive 2008/99/EC (Environmental Crime Directive)?
58. Please indicate which national authorities are responsible for periodic inspections in your Member State and describe briefly the system of inspections, indicating their frequency and level.
59. The misclassification of waste (hazardous waste presented as non-hazardous) is apparently an important enforcement issue. Do your authorities have experience in this regard? Please explain.
60. Which measures are taken to ensure that the production, collection and transportation of hazardous waste, as well as its storage and treatment, are carried out in conditions providing protection for the environment and human health?
61. Which actions are taken to ensure traceability from production to final destination and control of hazardous waste, in particular by record keeping pursuant to Article 35 of Directive 2008/98/EC and proper labelling of hazardous waste?
62. Within the context of Article 3(b) of the Environmental Crime Directive, does hazardous waste present any particular challenges regarding evidence or technical issues in terms of establishing the gravity of the offence?
63. Have you noticed any particular common modus operandi and trends in the illegal hazardous waste management?

XI - Illegal production or handling of dangerous materials

64. Do you have a definition of dangerous materials in your legislation?
65. Which kind of acts are prohibited or restricted related to the production or handling of dangerous materials according to your legislation?
66. Who decides whether a given substance should be considered as dangerous material or not, if it is not clear?
67. What kind of illegal activities related to the illegal production or handling of dangerous materials have you observed in your jurisdiction? Do you have specific provisions related to criminal activities involving dangerous materials such as chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials?
68. What is the current trend in the field of the illegal production or handling of dangerous materials in your jurisdiction?
69. How do you document the cases of illegal production or handling of dangerous material? What kind of evidence is collected? Do you actively share information about such cases with European and international partners? If yes, which channels do you use? (e.g. Europol; International Atomic Energy Agency's Incident and Trafficking Database; Interpol, etc.)
70. How do you handle the seized dangerous materials? Who bears the cost of manipulation with them and temporary storage during investigation? Who analyses the dangerous materials? Do you have standard operating procedures, which ensure cross-sectoral response?
71. Do you use techniques of financial or cyber investigations in these cases?
72. What are the main obstacles of investigation and prosecution of these cases?
73. Do you organise regular trainings for law enforcement on how to conduct investigations and on the response to an incident involving dangerous materials, such as chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials?