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**Thematic discussion on the challenge posed by emerging
forms of crime that have a significant impact on the
environment and ways to deal with it effectively**

Statement submitted by the International Sociological Association, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Thematic discussion on the challenge posed by emerging forms of crime that have a significant impact on the environment and ways to deal with it effectively

The International Sociological Association (www.isa-sociology.org) was founded in 1949 under the auspices of UNESCO. The goal of the ISA is to represent sociologists everywhere, regardless of their school of thought, scientific approaches or ideological opinion, and to advance sociological knowledge throughout the world. Its members come from 167 countries. The ISA has partnered with Criminologists Without Borders (www.criminologists-without-borders.org) to produce a review of the scientific literature on this year's theme. Criminologists Without Borders is a registered non-profit organization composed of criminologists, researchers, professors and those working in the field which provides objective information and research to inform policy and programmes dealing with crime and criminal justice. It offers a neutral forum for the pursuit of ideas and practices informed by evidence.

This statement summarizes recent research published in scientific journals that are generally accessible to academia only. The research selected focuses on illegal wildlife crime, illegal logging and IUU (illegal, unreported and unregulated) fishing, although synopses of other environmental crimes are also provided. A full handout will be available at the start of the CCPCJ 22nd Session, including extracts from the research summarized herein.

Knowns and Policy Recommendations

Illegal Trade in Wildlife

- Despite the significant declines in the numbers of iconic species in the wild, the illegal trade persists. In order to get to the core of the problem, policies must be devised to interrupt the supply and demand chain. Most current laws in place are either ineffective or countries lack resources to enforce these laws.
- Most countries do not have the necessary data collection mechanisms in place. In order for researchers to assess the extent of the problem, i.e. its trends and patterns, as well as actors involved, countries must be mandated to systematically collect such data and share it on an international platform. Such data must also be available to researchers upon request.
- Extensive trade exists in currently unprotected species. Their survival in the wild may be threatened if current laws are not extended to include these species.

Illegal Logging and Trade in Timber

- Illegal logging and trade is a multi-step process. Laws must focus on each step of this operation. Attention must be particularly focused on the investigation of tax fraud, corruption and anti-laundering, and investigations must focus on logging companies, plantations and mills.

IUU Fishing

- Countries suffer from IUU due to weak fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance measures in place. To ensure sustainable harvesting of marine resources, countries must strengthen these measures.
- Flags of convenience (FOCs) and ports of convenience (POCs) are significant facilitators of IUU fishing. More research must be conducted in order to identify the extent to which these FOCs and POCs contribute to the problem.
- Formal surveillance of territorial waters in the form of patrol vessels can significantly reduce IUU fishing activities. Countries should consider investing in these measures, or increase their formal surveillance capacity.
- Fishers engage in a cost/benefit analysis when engaging in IUU fishing. Therefore, penalties must be increased as to counter the financial gains from such activities.

Other Environmental Crimes

- Countries suffer from different types of environmental crimes that not only significantly affect the environment, but also threaten local resource-based livelihoods of millions of people. Countries must identify the environmental crimes prevalent within their region and regulate these crimes by way of new laws.
- There is great shortage of environmental inspectors in most countries. Countries must make effort in recruiting and training such personnel.
- Data gathering and sharing on environmental crime problems is largely absent or inefficient. The international community must encourage such efforts.

Unknowns

- Illegal international trade in wildlife. We do not have a quantitative knowledge of the species trafficked nor do we know the extent to which organized crime is involved; the links between the illegal wildlife trade and other illegal activity; and the role that traditional medicine markets play in the illegal harvesting of species.
- International IUU fishing. We do not know which marine species are most vulnerable to IUU fishing and at present have not quantified the true geographic concentrations of IUU fishing. We do not know the extent to which POCs and FOCs contribute to the problem.
- Illegal international trafficking in precious metals. We do not know the primary source and destination countries, as well as actors involved; what links exist between trafficking in precious metals and other forms of illegal activity.
- Illegal international trade in electronic waste. At present we do not know the international extent of this trade. We do not know the major source and destination countries where most of illegal trade in electronic waste occurs, nor do we know the international trade routes.

- Illegal international shipbreaking (i.e. moving ships from Western nations to countries with fewer regulations on dismantling): We do not know how successful the international organizations dealing with the problem are; how well shipbreaking is regulated; how its human and environmental impacts are controlled in countries where this practice is becoming a serious environmental problem.
- The victims of environmental crime: There is no clear classification system for the victims of environmental crime. Should we classify them by the nature of the harm, scope of the harm, extent of the damage to the environment? What are the global and local victimization patterns?

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