

FLOWS OF TRANSNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME: CASE STUDY RESEARCH ON WASTE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

Despite growing interest in green criminological issues, a need remains to develop research that grasps the complexity and transnational nature inherent to the phenomenon of transnational environmental crime. We hope to contribute to this in our PhD-study which focuses on transnational environmental crime and more in particular on the illegal transport of e-waste and timber. Both of these transnational environmental crime phenomena are inherently linked to globalisation and to transferences of levels or geographies. Therefore we explicitly took the transnational dimension into account and perceived both phenomena as flows.

We present the first results of a case study about illegal transports of e-waste and timber, for which a Belgian port served as the research setting. Based on a triangulation of data from document analyses and in-depth interviews, we try to de-anonymize the origin, intermediary and destination locations of these flows. We illustrate the characteristics of illegal transports of e-waste and timber as transnational environmental crime flows. We look at the environmental problems at the basis of their criminalization: what actors are involved, what the nature of the phenomena is and what its impact, harm and vulnerabilities are. This will provide meaning to the second goal of our research which focuses on the governance of transnational environmental crime flows. This second aim is to map governance nodes and networks and pay attention to different actors involved, to their interactions and potentially different finalities. This presentation focuses on the characteristics of illegal transports of e-waste and timber (goal 1) and hints towards the study of their governance (goal 2).