Environmental crime consists of illegal activities that damage the environment through the exploitation and/or destruction of natural resources, water, air, and land or to protected areas to make material gains for groups or individuals.

### CHALLENGES OF ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME

#### PUBLIC THREAT

- **Environmental crime**: 26.9% of Albanians consider it the second most dangerous threat to Albania in 2019. Women comprised 48.7% and men comprised 51.3% of the 1,559 interviewees.

#### ECONOMIC DAMAGE

Environmental crime takes a toll on the Albanian economy. Annual losses due to environmental crime are estimated at 7.69% of the country's GDP. Environmental crime is considered the 4th largest crime globally in 2018 according to UNEP and INTERPOL.

#### LAW ENFORCEMENT

Environmental crime requires trained, resourced, and responsive law enforcement. In Albania, the enforcement of waste crime, nature crime, and transboundary environmental crime needs to be strengthened.

#### DATA AND STATISTICS

- **7.69%**: Environmental crime marked an annual increase of 7.69% in Albania, according to the 2019 General Prosecution Annual Report.

- **1.5 MILLION M³**: Of firewood is logged annually in Albania, 2.5 times higher than the generation capacity.

#### KEY CHALLENGES IN ADDRESSING ENVIRONMENTAL CRIMES

- **Traceable cases**
- **Property registered cases**
- **Lack of updated statistics**

#### COOPERATION

- Prosecution
- Police
- Courts
- Inspectorate
- Citizens

Learn more about OSCE Presence in Albania environmental crimes activities.
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2015-2020

2015
- Produced the documentary: 74 KM! Water is life
- Organized 12 events linking local government, central authorities, law enforcement and expert (360 people)

2016
- Established an inter-institutional group against environmental crime (IGEC) composed of 11 entities and 12 experts to share information, deliver joint activities, inspections, and propose legal changes
- Raised public awareness on environmental information, also through arts and public activities

2017
- Built a strong national network of experts and practitioners from national organization, law enforcement agencies, NGOs and academic entities active in the field
- Organized 12 events linking local government, central authorities, law enforcement and expert (360 people)

2018
- Provided expert training to IGEC members to understand environmental crime, particularly on waste crime and illegal transboundary shipment of waste

2019
- Published the handbook for local authorities to act against environmental crime
- Contributed to the amendment of the Criminal Code to strengthen provisions against environmental crimes

2020
- Established the Consultative Group of Civil Society Organizations to push forward the government agenda on environmental crime
- Strongened academic linkage with institutions and law enforcement chain
- Published the conference proceedings “Environmental Crime, Environmental Security and National Security”, of V International Scientific Conference

OSCE PRESENCE IN ALBANIA ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS TIMELINE

- **Assessment**
  - In 2015, the Presence conducted an institutional assessment and SWOT analysis of the environmental crime situation in Albania
  - Then a ministerial order was prepared and issued to establish an inter-institutional group against environmental crimes (IGEC) involving 11 entities and 12 experts

- **Cooperation**
  - In 2016, the Presence developed a Strategy and an Institutional Development Plan 2015-2020 for IGEC
  - In 2017, training and qualification development were provided to all IGEC members which led to accreditation of 12 members of the group (by the Scottish Qualification Authority)

- **Functionality**
  - From 2018-2020, work was dedicated to strengthening the group’s interaction, joint inspections and co-operation through on-site visits, institutional presentations, workshops, forums and public discussion, and lectures with public universities

Learn more about OSCE Presence in Albania environmental crimes activities.

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CRIMINAL CODE

Article 201: Pollution of air, water and soil
Article 201/a: Waste management
Article 201/b: Waste transportation
Article 201/c: Hazardous activities
Article 201/d: Nuclear materials and hazardous radioactive substances

Article 202: Damage to protected species of wild flora and fauna
Article 202/a: Trade in protected species of wild flora and fauna
Article 202/b: Damage to habitats in environmentally protected areas

Article 203: Ozone-depleting substances

Article 204: Prohibited fishing

Article 205: Illegal felling of forests
Article 205/a: Destruction of forests by arson
Article 205/b: Destruction by negligent fire of forests and forest env.

Article 206: Felling of decorative and fruit trees
Article 206/a: Destruction of forests by arson

Article 206/b: Destruction by negligent fire of forests and forest env.

Article 207: Violation of plant and animal quarantine

Learn more about OSCE Presence in Albania environmental crime activities:

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO RAISE AWARENESS ON ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME

Citizens — Citizens need to be informed about the environmental crimes, risks, and dangers around themselves. They need to learn and engage to prevent environmental crimes in their territory.

Media — We live in a digital media and open source information. The use of media to communicate, engage with people and initiate reaction is very important to raise awareness and expose environmental crimes.

CSOs — Civil society is working on various environmental related problems such as industrial pollution, environmental degradation, breach of legislation and corruptive practices. As such, CSOs need to join forces and raise their concerns and provide solutions to address environmental crimes in institutions.

Government — The government needs to cooperate and use the expertise of all stakeholders with the aim to discourage, prevent and prosecute environmental crimes in Albania.

Learn more about OSCE Presence in Albania environmental crime activities.