

Green corruption

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In recent years the Institute has added a programme on what it calls green corruption. The term covers corruption that enables crimes against the environment and the laundering of their proceeds: illegal logging, illegal mining, wildlife trafficking, illegal fishing and waste trafficking. These crimes depend on corrupt officials who issue permits, ignore violations or falsify documents. They also generate large proceeds that enter the financial system. The programme works on investigative techniques, financial investigations into environmental crime, the use of anti-money laundering tools to detect such flows and the strengthening of cooperation between environmental and financial authorities.¹

The programme links the two meanings of the Basel brand that this chapter has traced. Waste trafficking, regulated by the Basel Convention, becomes a subject of financial investigation under the methods developed by the Basel Institute, while the proceeds of such trafficking may pass through banks that apply the Basel standards. The link is a coincidence of names. It nevertheless reflects a real convergence of policy fields, because the international community has come to treat environmental crime as financial crime. The FATF report of 2021, mentioned above, and the attention given to environmental crime by financial intelligence units are part of this development. For compliance officers, the convergence means that knowledge of environmental law has become part of the competence expected in financial crime prevention.²

1 Notes

1. On the Green Corruption programme of the Basel Institute on Governance, launched around 2020 and covering corruption linked to illegal logging, mining, wildlife trafficking, fisheries and waste trafficking, see the publications of the programme on the Institute's website. Year of launch to be verified. ↩

Green corruption

2. On the convergence of environmental crime and financial crime policy, see Financial Action Task Force, Money Laundering from Environmental Crime, 2021, and the publications of the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units on environmental crime. To be verified.
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