

PCWG NEWS

August 2019

WELCOME TO PCWG NEWS

On behalf of the Pollution Crime Working Group (PCWG) Board, I am delighted to introduce Volume 1, Issue 1 of our new quarterly newsletter that sets out in one place all of the important PCWG updates, recent activities, and upcoming events. We hope that the newsletter will help keep PCWG members engaged and up to date on PCWG activities between our annual meetings and provide a forum to celebrate the accomplishments of our members. A big thank you to our colleagues at Environment and Climate Change Canada, in particular PCWG Board Member Heather McCready, Sherri Stang, Verity Thomson, and Karina Barker for all their work in putting it together – the newsletter is something that has been discussed many times over the years, but they made it happen. If you have anything you would like to share with your PCWG colleagues in future newsletter, please send them to Sherri Stang at sherri.stang@canada.ca.



Photo: PCWG Board at the 2018 annual meeting in Kruger Park

This issue of the newsletter focuses on the outcomes of last year's INTERPOL Operation 30 Days at Sea. At our annual meeting in Rome in May 2017, following up our successful Operation 30 Days of Action, the PCWG decided that our next operation would focus on marine pollution in recognition of the serious environmental impacts marine pollution has on the environment, human safety, food security and economic development. This was the first time the PCWG designed an operation that focused exclusively on marine pollution and, truth be told, we were not sure what the interest level among member countries would be. When the results of the operation were tallied, however, we were blown away. Operation 30 Days at Sea not only turned out to be the most successful PCWG operation to date, involving 276 law enforcement and environmental protection agencies from 58 countries, but it also turned out to be the largest-ever global maritime operation focused exclusively on marine pollution. Additional results from the operation are set out in the newsletter below.

Future operational activity will focus on (1) Pollution from Vessels and Offshore Installations; (2) Land-Based and River Pollution Impacting the Marine Environment; and (3) Waste trafficking through Ports.

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I am also happy to announce that this year's 24th annual PCWG meeting will be held in Brussels, Belgium, between 12-14 November 2019, in conjunction with the LIFE SMART Waste (LSW) Final Conference. Please be sure to mark the dates on your calendar!

I want to thank my fellow Board members and INTERPOL's Global Pollution Enforcement Team who have worked tirelessly throughout the year to keep the PCWG moving forward and ensure we remain a "doing shop" rather than a "talking shop." Lastly, I wanted to thank all of you who helped make both the Operation 30 Days at Sea and the 23rd PCWG annual meeting such a success. For most of you, the PCWG is a labor of love as you also have a day job placing demands on your time and attention. What you have been able to accomplish is amazing and will have a significant and lasting positive impact on the environment.

If I ever can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact me at Joseph.Poux@usdoj.gov. I hope to see everyone in Brussels in November.

~Joe Poux, Chair, PCWG

SAVE THE DATE

The next PCWG meeting will be held on 12-14 November, 2019 in Brussels.

MEET THE BOARD

- >  **Joseph Poux, Chair**, Deputy Chief - Environmental Crimes Section, US Department of Justice, USA
- >  **William Wilson, Vice Chair**, Waste and Enforcement Manager, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, UK
- >  **Heather McCready**, Deputy Chief Enforcement Officer, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Canada
- >  **Kwabena Biritwum**, Principal Programme Officer, Environmental Protection Agency, Ghana
- >  **Edwin Lakerveld**, Director, Special intelligence and Investigation Service on Environmental Crime, Netherlands
- >  **Per Knut Vistad**, Special Investigator, The National Authority for Investigation and Prosecution of Economic and Environmental Crime, Norway
- >  **Mzondeleli Dlulane**, Director of Enforcement for Oceans and Coast, Department of Environmental Affairs, South Africa
- >  **Grant Walters**, Director of Enforcement for Environmental Impact and Pollution, Department of Environmental Affairs, South Africa
- >  **Jeff Bray**, Deputy, Office of Maritime and International Law, United States Coast Guard, USA

OPERATION 30 DAYS AT SEA

Post-Operational Meeting in Lyon, France

Accomplishments:

- > The operation brought together 276 law enforcement and environmental protection agencies from 58 countries around the world.
- > 15,446 inspections took place globally and resulted in the detection of over 1,500 marine pollution violations.
- > 202 vessels and 76 companies were reported to INTERPOL and 701 investigations were initiated with subsequent fines and prosecutions.

Strategy and Results:

- > The strength of this Operation was an unprecedented level of cooperation between law enforcement in tackling marine pollution. In the pre-operational phase, 12 regional and national operational planning meetings strengthened interagency, bilateral, and multilateral cooperation. The resulting global network of 122 officers coordinated the operation in their respective countries with the help of country-to-country expertise sharing and INTERPOL technical support.
- > During the tactical phase, the cooperation between law enforcement became the key driver of the Operation. Nationally, the creation of multi-agency task forces and, internationally, the implementation of bilateral and multilateral expertise sharing, intelligence exchange and investigative cooperation are what made this Operation remarkably effective.
- > Operational results revealed that 1 out of 10 inspections exposed a marine pollution violation, usually presenting a transnational profile. Oil pollution accounted for half of the offenses detected and were significant forms of pollution across all regions. Garbage discharge was important in all regions with economies in transitions: 25% of African cases, 35% of Asia- Pacific cases, 30% of Latin America cases. Over 90% of reported violations were detected during vessel inspections at port. Land-based offenses were mostly deliberate while offenses on vessels were more likely to result from negligence, accident, or poor conditions of on-board systems. Administrative cases made up 86% of violations detected, while criminal cases accounted for 11% and the remaining 2% were undetermined.
- > The post operational phase focused on a global communications campaign aimed at raising awareness on pollution crime conducted on major social media in partnership with UN Environment and Europol, as well as on the analysis of national operational results.



What's Next:

- > **Future operational activities:** Analysis of results from 30 Days at Sea has generated actionable intelligence to drive future targeted pollution operations.
- > **30 Days at Sea Final Report:** This report has been published and disseminated to all member countries.
- > **Organized Crime-Pollution Crime Nexus Analytical Report:** INTERPOL has produced an analysis of case studies, showing evidence of the involvement of organized crime in pollution incidents. An analytical report will be distributed to INTERPOL member countries and the PCWG network in Q4, 2019.

ORGANIZED CRIME-POLLUTION CRIME (OP-PC) MEETING

Summary of the 2019 OP-PC Meeting

- > On March 20 -22, INTERPOL's Global Pollution Enforcement Team hosted an investigative and analytical case meeting exploring the link between organized crime and pollution crime.
- > The meeting, attended by approximately 20 countries:
 - o used case studies to review available evidence establishing an OC-PC nexus;
 - o identified emerging trends;
 - o discussed enforcement challenges;
 - o explored solutions to these challenges; and
 - o identified next steps and a work plan for moving forward.
- > One specific area of focus was the rise of organized crime's involvement in pollution waste as a result of the enormous shift in waste streams following China's crack-down on the importation of waste into China.
- > The meeting was a follow-up to a work area identified at the last PCWG meeting in South Africa.
- > If you would like more information on the meeting or would like to participate in future meetings on the topic, please contact environmentalcrime@interpol.int.