ENVIRONMENTAL CRIMES
Today, environmental crimes amount to more than $100 billion a year. Those high-profit, low-risk crimes are destroying ecosystems, dramatically impacting on climate change and devastating local economies. Nevertheless, they are extremely hard to fight as they are constantly hidden within legal trade, take advantage of tax havens and are mostly controlled by huge criminal organizations such as mafias or illegitimate firms. This brochure provides an overview of the situation, identifies some of the most important points and suggests ways to fight against this global threat.

Environmental crimes are not soft crimes. They often occur in countries with a high rate of corruption involving violence and impacting directly on the poorest population. Environmental crimes take full advantage of the financial opacity (tax havens, e.g.) and the weakness of the worldwide transportation system (flags of convenience, e.g.). Controlled by mafias and corporations, illegal trade can “wear a tie” and be easily seen as harmless, clean and legal, whereas it involves a wide range of actors and criminal skills and can sometimes even be related to conflicts (diamonds, e.g.).
Zoï Environment Network and GRID-Arendal are supporting the international efforts to combat environmental crimes with the following activities:

- Analysis and assessment of the various facets of global environmental crimes
- Communication of the headlines to decision-makers and the general public in easily understandable maps, graphics and texts
- Training and support in environmental crimes investigations, assessment and communication to organizations and individuals from “hot spot regions”

The international community is becoming increasingly aware of the seriousness of global environmental crimes and is seeking ways to combat them at various scales ranging from global players to individuals.