**E-waste as a challenge for environmental governance. A criminological analysis.**

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The amount of e-waste generated globally has been estimated to reach about 72 billion tons annually by 2017. The transport from industrialized countries to developing countries of discarded non-functioning or outdated laptops, televisions sets, fridges and other electronics has been common practice in the last decades. Under the heading of ‘second hand goods’ they are transported to developing regions such as West Africa or South East Asia. Indeed, an important share of the transports actually feeds into the second hand electronics market. However, much of these transports never makes it to the second hand market and is dismantled for parts and for recovery of the secondary raw materials. Images taken at the Agbogbloshie dumpsite in Accra (Ghana) have travelled around the world in an attempt to raise awareness about the dumping of e-waste. The illegal transport of hazardous waste is one of the behaviours labelled as a major form of environmental crime (Beirne and South 2007; White 2011). Interpol and Europol have identified illegal e-waste trade as a key challenge (Envicrimenet 2014, Interpol 2014, Europol 2015).

This paper discusses how e-waste challenges the control of illegal trade as well as the prevention of environmental harm. By focusing on the role of state, corporate and civil society actors, insights are gained into the strengths and limitations of the governance framework. These suggest the need for reflection about both practical and theoretical implications that arise for environmental governance. The findings are based on a multi-method approach of document analyses, interviews and field visits. The flows between Antwerp (Belgium) and Accra (Ghana) were the particular focus. This paper makes no claims for generalization of the findings to other regions and trade flows, but does provide insights that help understand the social organisation, emergence and governance of illegal trade in (e-)waste in other locations.