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Protection of the environment through criminal law

Environmental crime is a growing concern and causes significant damage to the environment, citizens' health and the economy within the EU and worldwide.



Following a legislative proposal by the Commission, a first reading in Parliament and inter-institutional negotiations ('trilogue') between Parliament, Council and Commission, February 2024 saw a trilogue negotiation approved by Parliament (February 2024) and Council (March 2024). The new rules to protect the environment through criminal law entered into force on 20 May 2024.

The new Environmental Crime Directive will help achieve European Green Deal objectives by fighting against the most serious environmental offences, which can have devastating effects on both the environment and human health, through means of criminal law.

EWA NEWS provides you the key elements of the new Directive as well as links to the final text as published, the original Commission legislative proposal and the Guidance document "Combating environmental crimes and related infringements".