

## Information-Analytical and Technological Support for Combating Environmental Offenses

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The article examines the role of information and communication technologies in increasing the effectiveness of combating environmental offenses. The need to ensure the technological advantage of environmental protection and law enforcement agencies in the conditions of the rapid development of digital tools actively used by offenders is substantiated. The importance of integrated monitoring systems, big data analysis and modern software for detecting pollution, illegal logging and fires is shown. The importance of combining technical means with criminological methods of risk assessment and forecasting environmental crime is emphasized. It is emphasized that the digitalization of environmental security contributes to increasing the efficiency of response and the accuracy of management decisions. The conclusion is made about the need to form a single technological platform capable of integrating various data sources and providing a comprehensive approach to environmental protection.

**Keywords: environmental offenses, environmental monitoring, criminal analysis, digital technologies, big data, special knowledges, expertise, crime prevention.**

### 1. Introduction

Modern forms of crime are characterized by high dynamism, flexibility of adaptation and the ability to quickly change the methods of committing offenses, often ahead of the response measures applied by law enforcement agencies. This is especially noticeable in areas where criminal activity combines economic, environmental and information and technological components, which complicates its detection and documentation. In such conditions, traditional countermeasures are increasingly proving to be insufficient, which necessitates the need to update conceptual approaches to the organization of law enforcement activities. That is why it is important to rethink the role of innovative tools aimed at increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of countering criminogenic manifestations.

In order to minimize the lag between the development of crime and the response of state institutions, it is necessary to introduce comprehensive mechanisms for intensification of criminological activity, modernization of information and analytical work and increased use of integrated technological solutions. Innovative approaches, including the use of open sources of information, intelligent data processing systems and modern forensic methods, are able to identify systemic trends, predict criminal risks and overcome structural contradictions in the crime prevention system. Such a rethinking of the countermeasures toolkit is especially relevant in the field of environmental security, where the consequences of criminal activity have a clearly expressed socially

dangerous nature.

The key conceptual task of law enforcement agencies in these conditions remains to increase the efficiency of their main function - ensuring proper protection of the rights and interests of individuals, society and the state. The implementation of this function requires a transition from a reactive model to a proactive one, based on high-quality information and analytical support capable of supporting the processes of strategic planning and making management decisions. The use of modern technologies for collecting, analyzing and transmitting information allows you to increase the level of validity of such decisions, minimize the risks of operational miscalculations and ensure more efficient use of state resources.

A significant number of issues related to documenting the illegal activities of individuals and organized groups, establishing criminal, economic and corruption ties in the areas of environmental management and environmental safety, actualizes the need for a deeper study of methodological and practical aspects of information and analytical support for law enforcement agencies. It is precisely on the effectiveness of these processes that the effectiveness of detecting environmental offenses, forming an evidentiary base and neutralizing criminal schemes that harm the environment largely depends. In this regard, the study of new approaches, tools and technologies that can improve the quality of analytical and operational work is an important scientific and practical necessity.

## **2. Methodology**

The research methodology is based on a systemic approach, which allows us to consider the information and analytical support for combating environmental offenses as a holistic complex of interconnected processes, subjects and tools. To achieve the goal, general scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction were used, which made it possible to identify the essential characteristics of information processes, establish their place in the structure of law enforcement activities and determine the features of involving information resources in preventing environmental offenses. The systemic and structural method provided a study of the relationship between information and analytical components, as well as their role in the formation of management decisions aimed at combating illegal activities in the environmental sphere.

The method of comparative legal analysis was used to study the features of the regulatory regulation of information and analytical activities of law enforcement agencies, to compare the functional capabilities of the National Police, the specialized environmental prosecutor's office and other entities, as well as to determine the effectiveness of integrating modern concepts, in particular OSINT and Intelligence Led Policing, into national practice. The use of criminological and operational-analytical approaches made it possible to analyze the structure, dynamics and determinants of environmental crime, as well as to assess the impact of information resources on the possibilities of predicting, preventing and minimizing environmentally oriented offenses. The tools of statistical and content analysis provided an objective assessment of the effectiveness of law enforcement activities, which allowed to formulate substantiated conclusions on improving information and analytical support in this area.

## **3. The essence of information and analytical support**

Scientists define information and analytical support as a special type of intellectual activity, which consists in providing management entities with relevant information and creating optimal conditions for meeting information needs, exercising rights and fulfilling obligations based on the formation and use of information and analytical resources [1; 2]. The content of such activity involves assessment, diagnostics and analysis aimed at collecting, organizing, classifying and summarizing information, which serves as the basis for making optimal management decisions [3].

In the doctrine, information and analytical activity is usually associated with the prevention and disclosure of high-profile, serious and especially serious illegal acts. Within the framework of analytical processing of information, its receipt and evaluation are carried out with regard to the

identity of the offender, the circumstances of the offense, the tools used, the time and place of its commission and other relevant aspects [4].

Instead, the preventive effect of such a specific function of specially authorized units of law enforcement agencies, in our opinion, unfairly remains beyond the attention of researchers. After all, as the practice of combating environmental offenses convincingly demonstrates, in many cases the priority is the role of the system of organizational and analytical support of individual law enforcement agencies and their units as a link, which determines the effectiveness of their work in this direction. We believe that knowledge of the possibilities of information and analytical activity in the direction of preventing environmental offenses and their skillful application in the practical activities of specialized subjects of law enforcement agencies can become a significant tool in the fight against the analyzed illegal acts. Among the subjects of preventing environmental offenses, special attention requires clarification of the specifics of the implementation of information and analytical work by the bodies of the National Police of Ukraine and the Specialized Environmental Prosecutor's Office, their services and units, which are the main subjects that, within the limits of their powers, fight crime in the studied area. In accordance with Part 1 and 2 of Article 25 of the Law of Ukraine "On the National Police of Ukraine", the police carries out information and analytical activities exclusively within the limits of its legislatively defined powers. Within the limits of this activity, it: forms registers and databases (banks) that are part of the unified information system of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine; uses registers and databases (banks) of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and other state authorities; carries out information search and analytical work; ensures information interaction with other state authorities, law enforcement agencies of foreign states and international organizations; provides in electronic form to the Unified State Register of Conscripts, Military Enlisted Persons and Reservists the information provided for in Articles 7 and 14 of the Law of Ukraine "On the Unified State Register of Conscripts, Military Enlisted Persons and Reservists", necessary for maintaining military records [5].

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Analysis of scientific approaches to the phenomenon under study allows us to define information and analytical support for combating environmental offenses as a set of measures carried out by relevant entities and aimed at searching, collecting, processing, systematizing and using information in order to make managerial decisions on preventing such illegal acts. The content of this activity includes systematic knowledge about the state and dynamics of the development of criminal offenses against the environment in general or their individual types, the operational situation, the investigative and operational-search situation, which are formed by investigators, employees of operational units or specially created units of information and analytical support on the basis of criminal law, criminal procedure, forensic, criminological and operational-search information [6].

Information and analytical support of activities to combat environmental offenses against the environment consists of two relatively autonomous components: (1) information, which includes the collection, processing, accumulation and systematization of data on criminal offenses and the identity of the offender; (2) analytical, which involves assessing the state, structure and dynamics of crime against the environment, identifying negative deviations in its structure, establishing determinant cause-and-effect relationships and predicting trends in change.

Methods of analytical intelligence and analytical search are aimed at identifying, accumulating and processing information about illegal activities in a specific territory.

Analytical intelligence is a specific form of information and analytical work, which consists in collecting, systematizing and analytically processing operational-search information and known facts

in order to obtain new knowledge about individuals and groups of operational interest [7]. Within the framework of tactical tasks, analytical intelligence involves the analysis of environmental offenses in a certain territory in a short period of time, as well as the study of the illegal activities of individual individuals or groups to develop measures to detain offenders, identify risks and prevent specific offenses. In the strategic dimension, analytical intelligence is aimed at identifying and assessing threats to the environment, society and the state, which allows you to determine the vulnerabilities of the law enforcement system or a certain area of public relations and form management decisions to prevent environmental offenses.

#### **4. Organizational and technical features of the application of analytical intelligence activities in combating environmental offenses**

The subject composition of analytical intelligence activities also has its own features: the implementation of analytical intelligence to solve operational and tactical tasks falls within the competence of bodies whose main function is the pre-trial investigation of environmental offenses - the National Police of Ukraine and the State Bureau of Investigation, as well as the Specialized Environmental Prosecutor's Office, which provides procedural guidance in this area.

One of the most pressing problems of increasing the effectiveness of prevention measures is the improvement of the information base, both in qualitative and quantitative terms. Various entities of criminological activity (the National Police, the State Bureau of Investigation, the Security Service of Ukraine, etc.) due to the specifics of their spheres of activity and powers possess data on illegal activities against the environment of different volumes and contents. The practice of preventing such offenses suffers from a deficit in the systematization, analysis, exchange and use of this information by all authorized entities, which is due, first of all, to the limited access of individual law enforcement agencies to information with limited access. Given the specifics of most criminal offenses against the environment, provided for in Chapter VIII of the Special Part of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, the use of data from open sources in analytical intelligence is of particular importance. One of the most effective tools in this context is the concept of OSINT (Open Source Intelligence) - intelligence based on the analysis of open sources. OSINT is a methodology and technology for obtaining and using military, political, economic and other information from open sources without violating the law. It is used for decision-making in the areas of national defense, security and investigations [8].

Thanks to OSINT, analysts can process data on committed and planned criminal offenses, receiving a ready-made operational-analytical product instead of primary information. This provides a number of advantages: first, the product allows you to determine crime trends not only in the geographical dimension, but also in time; second, thanks to more detailed information about possible places of committing criminal offenses, law enforcement officers can spend time and resources more effectively on preventing illegal actions [9].

The concept of Intelligence Led Policing (ILP), or “policing driven by analytics,” involves the systematic collection and evaluation of operational information within a clear analytical process, the formation of high-quality strategic and tactical analytical products and their use for informed management decisions based on criminal analysis and risk assessment [6]. Ukrainian law enforcement agencies are gradually integrating individual components of the ILP model. In particular, the following types of analysis are already used in the process of analytical activity: operational (analysis of information from telephone connections, research into the activities of criminal groups, analysis of criminal proceedings materials, comparative analysis); tactical (criminal analysis, analysis of crime dynamics and trends, spatial and geographical analysis, identification of crime “hot spots”, temporal analysis, construction of criminal models, profiling of suspects and victims); strategic (SWOT analysis, PEST analysis, modeling of forms and structures of crime, identification of profiles, trend analysis, geographical profiling). OSINT analysis and multi-source analysis (Multi-Source Analysis) [10] are also used.

In the field of environmental protection, the use of ILP allows for the formation of a holistic system of operational information management regarding environmentally oriented criminal activity.

Such a system ensures the use of operational data as a basis for identifying and assessing risks (in particular, regarding certain categories of criminal offenses, for example, in the field of forest resources or subsoil use, criminal networks, social consequences, etc.), as well as for determining priorities and strategic or operational goals in the field of combating crime and other threats to environmental security. In addition, ILP contributes to the adoption of substantiated management decisions and the optimal use of human, material and technical resources.

The information and analytical component of the activities of the prosecutor's offices is regulated by the Order of the Prosecutor General's Office "On the General Principles of Organizing Work in the Prosecutor's Office of Ukraine" No. 365 dated August 7, 2020. In accordance with this document, the Prosecutor General's Office, taking into account the state of law in the state, the scale of violations of the rights and freedoms of citizens and the interests of the state, as well as the priorities defined in the work plans, forms specific measures to address important and urgent tasks. Among them are the organization of a comprehensive analytical study of problems, checking the state of compliance with legislation within the scope of competence, coordinating work in individual areas in regional prosecutor's offices, providing practical assistance to their heads, etc. (clause 10.3 of the Order) [11].

In our opinion, the key groups of tasks of statistical analysis include: a descriptive function, which consists in characterizing the state, structure, prevalence and dynamics of offenses, as well as the effectiveness of state measures of social control and maintenance of law; an explanatory function, which involves establishing statistical connections, dependencies and correlations between the structure and dynamics of crime and the factors that determine it, as well as the activities of state and public institutions in this area; a predictive function, which consists in determining trends in criminal offenses and forming criminological forecasts; an organizational and managerial function, aimed at identifying problematic aspects in the state of crime, as well as strengths and weaknesses in the work of law enforcement agencies, which serves as the basis for making appropriate management decisions.

Taking into account the fact that traditionally there are two relatively conventional directions of analytical work of prosecutors' bodies - internal (related to the collection, analysis, assessment and transmission of information in order to determine the effectiveness of the organization and activities of the prosecutor's bodies themselves) and external (aimed at assessing the implementation of the tasks assigned to the prosecutor's office in interaction with other entities) [12], it can be argued that the prevention of criminal offenses against the environment belongs mainly to the external direction. This is explained by the fact that the effectiveness of prevention in this area depends on a comprehensive analysis of the state of environmental crime and an assessment of the effectiveness of the actions of other bodies involved in combating such offenses.

Based on theoretical concepts of conducting analytical activities, as well as on the relevant tasks defined in the Procedure for Coordination of Law Enforcement Activities in the Field of Counteracting Crime, approved by Order of the Prosecutor General No. 28 of 08.02.2021, information and analytical activities aimed at preventing criminal offenses against the environment include: analysis of crime in the specified area in general and individual criminal offenses in particular, its structure, dynamics and forecasting of trends, development of proposals for ways to solve relevant problems of an organizational, tactical, technical, managerial and other nature; development, coordination, identification of executors and implementation of measures aimed at preventing criminal offenses, clarification of the causes and conditions that contributed to their commission; initiation and submission of proposals for improving legislation in the specified area.

Therefore, the relevant orders of the Prosecutor General's Office should contain clear recommendations on the correct application of the analysis method in activities to prevent criminal offenses against the environment, in particular, define the concept of information and analytical activities, forms and stages of application, objects and purpose, taking into account the provisions of current legislation, scientific provisions of criminology. The final result of the application of statistical analysis in the analytical activities of law enforcement agencies should be the establishment of trends in the state, structure and dynamics of crime, the identification of factors contributing to the

commission of criminal offenses, the formation of forecasts, as well as the development of proposals for eliminating shortcomings in order to prevent their recurrence in the future.

The procedure for coordinating the activities of law enforcement agencies in the field of combating crime, approved by Order of the Prosecutor General's Office No. 28 of 08.02.2021, contains norms according to which the exchange of analytical information between prosecutors' offices and other law enforcement agencies is carried out both on their initiative and in accordance with agreed joint decisions, in particular those taken at coordination or joint meetings. Such exchange is aimed at identifying positive and negative trends in the field of combating crime, analyzing law enforcement practice, assessing the effectiveness of the implementation of agreed measures, identifying possible areas for optimizing this work, as well as identifying problems that require an operational or comprehensive solution and finding ways to eliminate them [13]. The results of joint analytical activities are, as a rule, considered at coordination and joint meetings with the subsequent adoption of the relevant agreed measures.

The Regulation on the Specialized Environmental Prosecutor's Office (as a Department) of the Prosecutor General's Office No. 185 dated 05.07.2023 also includes norms regulating the information and analytical activities of specialized structural units. Thus, according to clause 5.1, the head of the Specialized Environmental Prosecutor's Office ensures the organization of analytical and methodological work; according to clause 4.4, the department of organizational and methodological work and documentary support carries out analytical activities in cooperation with other units of the Specialized Environmental Prosecutor's Office; and according to clause 5.8.5, prosecutors of this department, together with employees of other units, prepare generalizing, analytical and methodological documents, report notes, certificates, draft information and orientation letters, as well as letters with comments, instructions and other official materials and organize their accounting [14].

From the analysis of the specified profile regulatory and legal document, it is seen that it does not contain provisions that determine the mutual exchange of information and analytical information by the Specialized Environmental Prosecutor's Office and other law enforcement agencies, which may lead to incomplete use of the capabilities of individual provisions of the Regulations on the Specialized Environmental Prosecutor's Office in combating environmental crime.

Researchers also draw attention to the problem of proper awareness of the role of information, analysis and analytical intelligence in practical activities. In particular, management often perceives analytical activities as a tool for ensuring control, management and accountability, while operational employees seek to obtain information useful for performing direct tasks in combating and preventing crime, and often do not show interest in its circulation [6]. Therefore, it is important to emphasize that the expansion of the use of analytical information and the introduction of analytical procedures in units should be preceded by the creation of clear, understandable and reliable mechanisms that will ensure the proper analytical potential, access to information and the use of analytical products.

Solving the above problems will undoubtedly contribute to increasing the efficiency of information and analytical activities as a process and expand the possibilities of using analytical products as its result in the field of preventing environmental offenses.

Based on the above, it can be argued that a necessary prerequisite for effective criminological activities to combat environmental offenses, primarily their organized manifestations, can be proper information and analytical support for such activities, provided that they comply with advanced foreign standards of means, methods and tools that are introduced into law enforcement practice.

Given the high level of organization and technical equipment of "environmental" criminals, primarily in the field of forestry and subsoil use, there is a need to find innovative means of prevention, which involves the use of modern achievements of technological, digital and scientific and technical progress. In particular, based on the clarification of trends in environmental crime, we see a need to determine the prospects for the use of modern information search systems and technologies, UAVs, electronic systems and mobile applications in the prevention of criminal offenses against the environment.

## 5. Conclusion

Effective counteraction to environmental offenses in the context of the rapid development of Internet technologies is possible only if environmental protection and law enforcement agencies ensure a constant technological advantage over offenders who use innovations for criminal purposes. This requires the formation of a comprehensive state policy of digitalization of environmental security, which includes the modernization of technical support, the development of electronic services, updating methods for detecting offenses and increasing the level of professional training of specialists to work with digital platforms. In this way, a high-tech approach becomes a key condition for increasing the capacity of state institutions to counteract environmental threats, the sources of which are increasingly information and technological in nature.

Modern trends in the development of criminological science confirm that information and communication technologies can significantly increase the effectiveness of preventive activities of state bodies. This is about the possibility of implementing innovative methods of collecting, analyzing and mapping criminological information, which allows you to form risk-oriented strategies for preventing offenses, forecasting them and identifying the most dangerous areas. It is also important to use analytical systems capable of modeling the dynamics of environmental crime at the general social, special criminological and individual preventive levels.

Today, the technical tools of environmental protection cover a wide range of means - from stationary sensors and camera traps to unmanned aerial vehicles and remote sensing complexes of the Earth. However, their effectiveness will increase significantly only if an integrated technological and analytical environment is created, which will combine all sources of environmental information into a single platform. Such an approach will provide operational access to data, enable automated detection of anomalies and allow the formation of an evidence base much faster and more accurately than is possible within the framework of traditional control methods.

In this context, the key task is the development and implementation of tools for analyzing big data coming from various environmental, satellite and open sources. The use of such technologies will allow us to determine the causes of air pollution, detect illegal deforestation, record the facts of water pollution, and timely identify fire sources even in difficult weather conditions or with significant smoke. Therefore, the combination of modern technologies, analytical capabilities of artificial intelligence, and interagency cooperation should become the basis of a new model of environmental security that can effectively respond to the challenges of the digital age.

Finally, we note that the use of specialized knowledge of experts and specialists is a key condition for the legitimate and effective use of modern technical means in combating criminal offenses. The involvement of specialists in forensics, digital forensics, big data analysis, the operation of unmanned aerial vehicles and mobile laboratories ensures not only technically correct receipt, recording and processing of evidentiary information, but also compliance with the requirements of admissibility, reliability and integrity of evidence in criminal proceedings. In this context, specialized knowledge acts as a connecting link between complex technological tools and procedural standards of evidence, since it is experts and specialists who are able to properly document procedures, maintain the chain of custody of evidence and interpret the results obtained in accordance with current legislation and international standards in the field of human rights.

The effective use of specialized knowledge is inseparable from proper professional training and continuous improvement of the skills of the relevant subjects. The authors emphasize that the level of competence of experts and specialists depends not only on the technical quality of the research conducted, but also on the ability to timely identify the risks of manipulation of digital evidence, algorithmic bias, violations of privacy and other human rights. Therefore, it is advisable to form interdisciplinary competencies that combine deep technical knowledge with an understanding of procedural guarantees, principles of legality, proportionality and ethical requirements, which allows experts and specialists to act not only as technical executors, but also as full-fledged subjects of evidence in the modern digitalized criminal justice system.

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