

In cooperation with Norway, the fight against environmental crime in Latvia will be improved

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On 1 February, the Ministry of the Interior hosted an informal visit by representatives of Norwegian law enforcement authorities to discuss potential inter-institutional cooperation between Norwegian and Latvian investigative authorities to strengthen the capacity to investigate environmental crimes in Latvia.

In response to the offer of cooperation made by the Norwegian National Police Directorate to support Latvia in its efforts to better prevent and combat environmental crime, the Ministry of the Interior is exploring the possibility of providing additional funding to the State Police for the implementation of cooperation activities under the European Economic Area (EEA) grant programme “International Police Cooperation and Combating Crime”. It was concluded that the cooperation has great potential and should be launched as soon as possible.

The meeting discussed the systems and current developments in both countries for investigating environmental crime. Particular attention was paid to crimes related to pollution, waste management offences and improper trade in animals. Experts from the

Norwegian National Authority for Investigation and Prosecution of Economic and Environmental Crime also shared their experience with the State Police.

It is important to strengthen cooperation as environmental crime has a strong cross-border character and is often linked to economic crime. It could therefore perfectly complement the EEA grant programme "International Police Cooperation and Combating Crime", whose main objective is to prevent and combat economic crime.

The Parties agreed on a plan for future activities. The specific cooperation activities will be launched in the spring of this year and a cooperation agreement will be signed between the State Police and the Norwegian National Authority for Investigation and Prosecution of Economic and Environmental Crime.

The Ministry of the Interior has been working for a long time to strengthen cooperation with Norwegian law enforcement authorities, so this international cooperation is another step towards a safer and more competitive Latvia.

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