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Eco-mafia and the illegal transport of hazardous waste

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The arduous fight against transnational Eco-mafia aimed at the illegal trafficking of waste

This study outlines a phenomenon that has been corroding our planet earth for several years, causing irreversible and invaluable damage: the illicit management of waste. This embraces a series of pipelines; the illegal trafficking of hazardous waste is of greater concern and, in particular, when it is managed by organized criminal groups operating at a transnational level. A large part of the companies in the sector are attracted by the abusive management of waste, implementing a fusion between legality and illegality, such as to make the contrast very uncomfortable.

The complexity of the phenomenon inexorably intersects with the disorganization of the regulatory regimes.

De iure condito, criminal law appears to be the most appropriate response to the offenses caused by Eco-mafia organizations. These, operating on a transnational basis, involve the European, international and domestic spheres. The varied regulations all illustrate the complexity of the phenomenon generated by environmental crime.

Huge business revolves around an enormous amount of waste. The waste on which organized crime has made the most money in recent years is plastic, which from waste of little value becomes a source of extraordinary wealth. Plastic processing, in addition to being complex, is very expensive, stimulating most companies to rely on organized crime.

The focal point of the entire discussion will be the "*Plastic Free*" investigative operation, which took place in the Sicilian territory of Scicli. The mafia group attributable to the "stidda" has implemented a dense network of connections with China to illegally export harmful plastics from greenhouses in the Ragusa area. The intricate plots of the court case prove the weakness of the crime-fighting measures.

The fight against a crime that almost always assumes a transnational nature remains only a utopia with today's tools. *De jure condendo*, an intense cooperation that involves all the importing and exporting States together with a comprehensive reform of the Italian legal system can be a desirable solution. Lastly, a promotion towards greater awareness for the care of the environment, which involves the whole society, is essential.