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Cover image: Sonia E. Barrett, Table No. 6, 2013, wood and metal.. Digital image courtesy of Bruno Weiss.

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INTERPRT is a research and design studio dedicated to environmental justice. Working with civil society organisations, we undertake long-form investigations about under-represented environmental violations using geospatial analysis and architectural methodologies.

There is currently no International Criminal Law to protect the environment against ecological destruction and the climate emergency. That is why we advocate for criminalising “ecocide” as part of the Stop Ecocide Campaign. It is within this context that our studio has been exploring legislative and activist history at the intersection of environmental protection and international justice using visual culture.

Broadly speaking, our visual research has closely looked at the few legal precedents where environmental destruction was considered as part of the evidence of war crimes. It has examined how environmental protection in times of peace was excluded in the systematic development of international crimes. And it has tried to chart the counter-history of how civil society has kept alive the hopes of criminalising ecocide in the passionate demand for protecting the planet.

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Figure 1.

INTERPRT, The campaign to make ecocide an international crime, video explainer, 2020. Digital image courtesy of INTERPRT (CC BY-NC 4.0).

Figure 2.

Earth Law, Museon, The Hague, 2018. Digital image courtesy of INTERPRT (CC BY-NC 4.0). Exhibition and microsite in collaboration with Polly Higgins and Ecological Defence Integrity held in conjunction with the 17th Assembly of State Parties (ASP) of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Figure 3.

Earth Law, Museon, The Hague, 2018. Digital image courtesy of INTERPRT (CC BY-NC 4.0).

Figure 4.

"Ecocide is a crime against the environment. Our work is to make ecocide an international crime", Dhaka Art Summit, 2020. Digital image courtesy of INTERPRT (CC BY-NC 4.0).

In 1947, as part of the United Nations War Crimes Commission (UNWCC), Poland listed eleven German administrators and foresters as war criminals for the devastation of Polish forests using scientific forestry. Case no. 1307, as it was filed with the UNWCC, sets one of the earliest precedents of

criminal charges for environment destruction. We reconstructed Case no. 1307 combining archival research, interviews, aerial imagery, and LiDAR analysis.

Figure 5.

Race and Forest (Rasa i Las), solo exhibition, Warsaw Biennale, 2020. Digital image courtesy of INTERPRT (CC BY-NC 4.0).

Figure 6.

Race and Forest (Rasa i Las), Warsaw Biennale 2019 “Let’s Organize Our Future!”, Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, 2019. Digital image courtesy of INTERPRT (CC BY-NC 4.0).

Chełmno was the first of the extermination camps of the Holocaust situated near Łódź in central Poland. In 1942, a secret reforestation programme was carried out here with the crushed bones of victims used as fertiliser whose sole purpose was to hide the traces of mass killing. We used airborne 3D laser scanning (LiDAR) that penetrated the trees to reveal the microtopography of the ground underneath, the first such survey carried out at the site. The remote sensing investigation allowed us to better understand Rzuchowski forest as living evidence of the environmental dimensions of mass atrocity crimes and their forgotten histories.

[View this illustration online](#)

Figure 7.

INTERPRT, Living Evidence, single channel video, 12 minutes 14 seconds.
Home Works 8/Beirut Art Center, 2019. Digital image courtesy of INTERPRT (all rights reserved).

Archival research about the legal and alternative forums in which the status of the natural environment under international justice was defined, prosecuted, and contested: the United Nations and the International Law Commission; International criminal tribunals and courts; citizen's tribunals, campaigns, and other civil society platforms. Following COVID-19 restrictions, the posters were sent to cultural institutions across Poland.

2019

Papież Franciszek nawołuje do uzna- nia ekobójstwa jako zbrodni międzyna- rodowej i grzechu ekologicznego.

SPRAWIEDLIWOŚĆ SPOŁECZNA obejmuje działania społeczeństwa obywatelskiego, dotąd przeważnie z krajów Globalnej Północy, mające na celu doprowadzenie do włączenia zbrodni ekobójstwa do prawa międzynarodowego. Od burzliwych czasów wojny w Wietnamie po dzisiejszy kryzys klimatyczny, organizacje obywatelskie energicznie zabiegają o ochronę Ziemi na gruncie prawa karnego. To właśnie ten splot praktyk prawnych dotyczących środowiska i antropocentrycznego międzynarodowego systemu prawa karnego jest punktem wyjścia dla tej osi czasu.

Figure 8.

The Ecological Imperative, Poster series “Civil justice” (in collaboration with Jakub de Barbaro), Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, 2020. Translation: “Pope Francis calls for the recognition of ecocide as international crime and ecological sin”. Digital image courtesy of INTERPT (CC BY-NC 4.0).

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