

The Regulation of Transboundary Shipments  
of Hazardous Waste: a Case Study of the  
Dumping of Toxic Waste  
in Abidjan, Cote d' Ivoire

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*The worldwide concern about the transboundary movement and disposal of hazardous wastes which heightened in the late 1970s and early 1980s culminated in the tightening of environmental laws in developed nations and the adoption of international instruments to address the movement and dumping of hazardous and toxic waste. The resulting rise in the costs of disposing hazardous waste in developed countries coupled with the globalisation of shipping has in turn created immense opportunities and incentives for illegal trafficking of wastes. The poorest of the poor are increasingly becoming the recipients of the hazards and poisons of the rich. Some figures estimate that toxic waste destined for "recycling" in Asian countries constitutes as much as 90 per cent of all toxic waste shipments.*

*The fundamental question that the sad saga of the recent Cote d'Ivoire toxic waste dumping has thrown to the fore once again is how effective is the existing preventive or remedial action to combat the illegal transfer of, and illicit traffic in toxic and hazardous wastes in the face of the poverty of the world's vulnerable and the politics of the rich.*