Introducing Ecognize

Professional environmental reporting, information sharing & collaboration platform

The Problem

- *„We need greater sharing and exchange of information."* **- Stephen Carmody, WJC**

  in: The Independent, 20 August 2020 („Can social media be weaponised against the illegal wildlife trade?")

- *„I have repeatedly expressed my frustration at the failure to exchange information between relevant agencies at national, regional and international levels."* **- John M. Sellar, former Chief of Enforcement, CITES**

  in: „The UN's Lone Ranger", by John M. Sellar

Ecognize – One Platform, Two Visions

1. Allow anyone from anywhere globally to report environmental issues (sales of forbidden goods, pollution, fires, poaching, logging & clearing…) **and distribute report automatically to authorities & NGOs**

2. Allow cross-organization and cross-agency collaboration, information sharing and data exchange
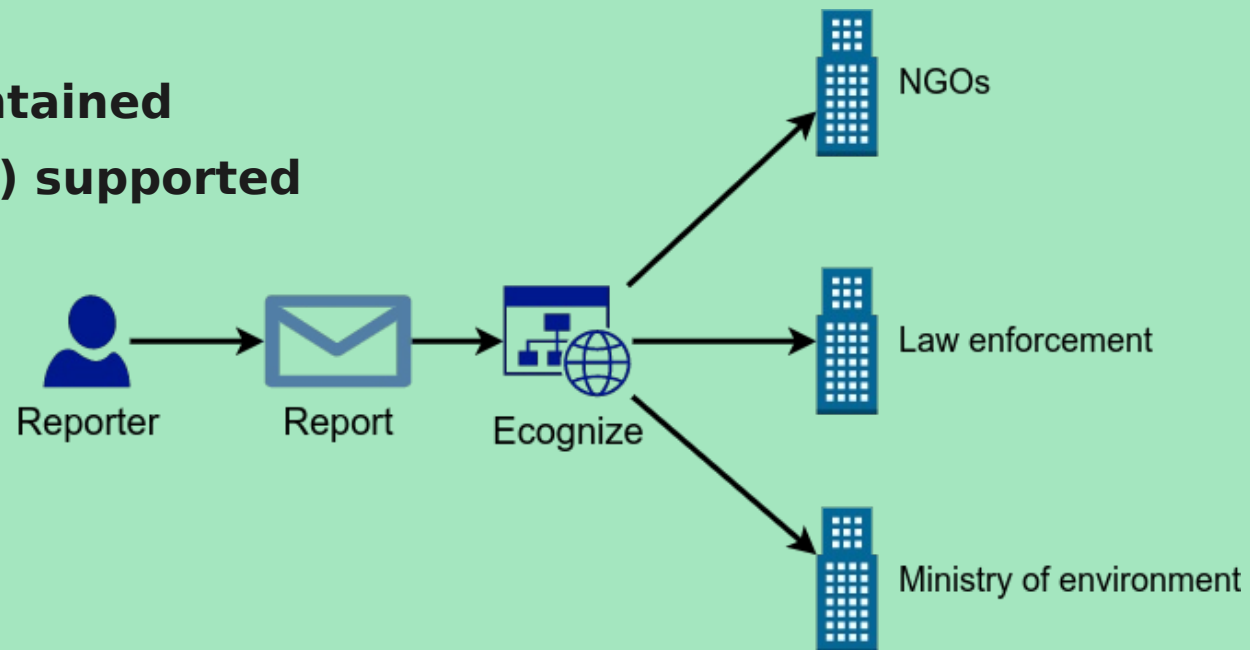
Vision 1: Reports – Submission, dissemination & search

Reporting: Motivation

- **Use case:**
  - **Anyone globally** should be able to report on environmental issues & crimes
  - Reports should get delivered to **all** local authorities & NGOs automatically

- **Inspired by eJustice app by Sri Lanka-based Centre for Environmental Justice (CEJ)**

- **Instead of every country or every organization having own solution:**
  - **One** single, international app
    - Save development efforts & unify report databases
    - Global dataset allows global data analysis
    - All registered organizations gain access to reports
  - **Report dissemination to all authorized organizations with legitimate interest**
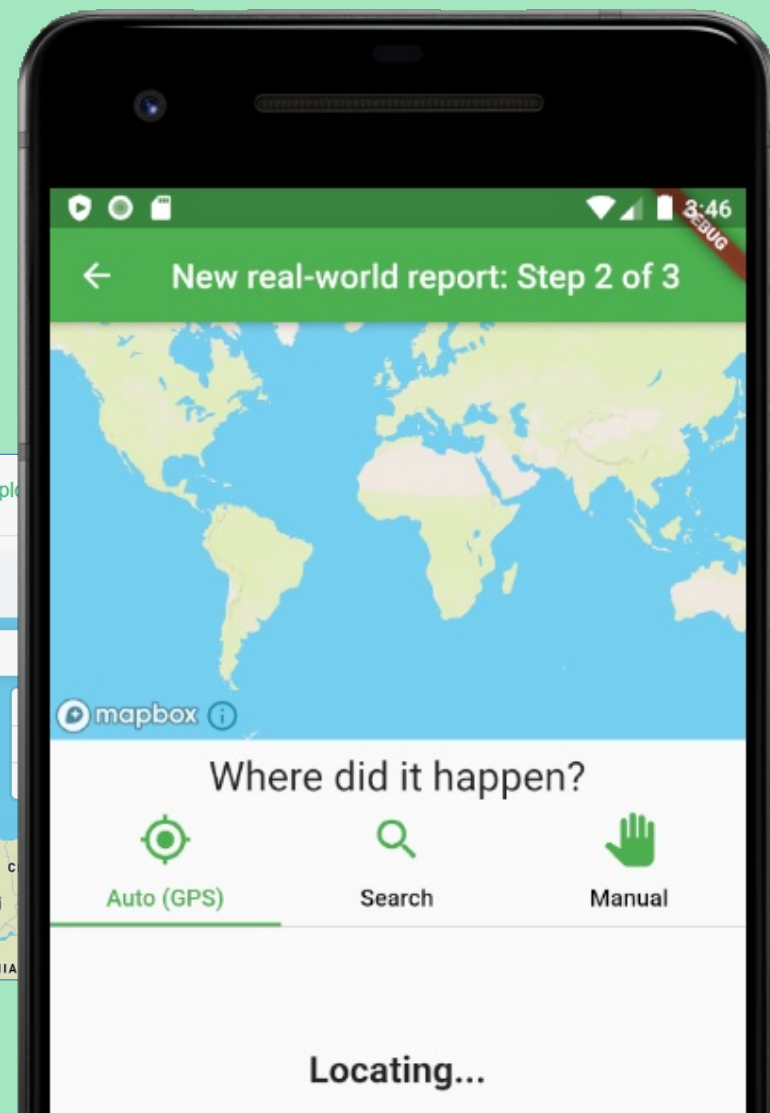   - In country of report and internationally

Ecognize: Report submission & dissemination

- **Registered users and non-registered / anonymous users can submit reports**
  - Real-world reports
  - Internet/online reports (social media posts, illegal online sales, groups/marketplaces…)
- **Reports get disseminated automatically**
  - To all non-profit organizations, law enforcement, gov. bodies in country of report
  - International organizations
- **Reporter anonymity is maintained**
- **Image upload (for evidence) supported**

Reporter → Report → Ecognize → NGOs, Law enforcement, Ministry of environment

Ecognize: Report submission & dissemination

- **Means of submission:**
  - Mobile app
  - Website

Step 1 of 3: Choose report type   Step 2 of 3: Create report   Step 3 of 3: Upl...

< Back

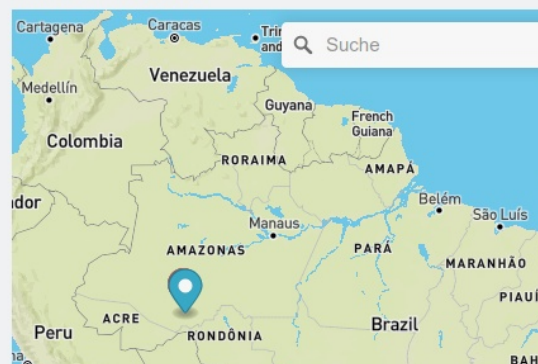What happened?*

Illegal logging & land clearing

Additional info - describe what happened, name of the place, people involved...:

Loggers belonging to ... cut down trees in indigenous territory

Where did it happen?*

New real-world report: Step 2 of 3

Where did it happen?

Auto (GPS)   Search   Manual

Locating...

Ecognize: Reports database & search

- **Searchable by date, country, categories, ...**

ID	Details	Date	Category	Subcategory	Location type	Country
48	ℹ	05.10.2020, 03:00	Selling & commercial activity	Food	Market, stall, booth, etc.	Germany
41	ℹ	26.09.2020, 03:00	Pollution	Machinery (cars, household appliances, etc.)	River	Germany
42	ℹ	26.09.2020, 03:00	Selling & commercial activity	Live animals	Shop	Germany
43	ℹ	26.09.2020, 03:00	Animals	Entertainment	Shop	Germany

Vision 2: Collaboration, communication & data sharing

Ecognize: Communication & collaboration

Main features:

- **Forums system**

- **File & folder exchange (like Dropbox)**

- **Chat**

- **User search & user profiles**

- **Organization directory & pages**

Ecognize: Forums
Communication & collaboration

- **Easily establish communications channel between whole organizations and/or single users**

- **Between and within organizations**
    - Organizations also receive free <u>internal</u> digital communication platform

- **Permanent channel or project-based**

- **Nationally or internationally**

- **Foster collaboration & communication between and within organizations**

- **Quick interaction with all professionals within same professional field, no matter which organization**

Ecognize: Forums
Communication & collaboration

Forums for:

- **occupational communities**

- **The public**

- **Each organization**

- **Each organization's sibling, parent and child organizations**

- **User-created forums**

Public forums
These forums can be accessed by everybody on EcoNet.

- Public forums (worldwide)
- Public forums Germany

Occupational community forums
These forums can be accessed by everybody who shares the same occupation.

- NGO forums (worldwide)
- NGO forums Germany

Your organization's forums
These forums can be accessed only by members of your organization.

- Forums for WWF Germany

Your organization group's forums
These forums are shared by your umbrella organization and all its sub-organizations.

- Forums for WWF International and sub-organizations

User-created forums

Open new forum +

These forums can be accessed only by members invited by respective forum's administrator(s).

- WWF Germany & Customs USA
- WWF Germany & MoE Germany
- WWF Germany & Pro Wildlife: Project XYZ

Ecognize: File exchange
Communication & collaboration

- **Like Dropbox or OneDrive**

- **Upload files and folders to platform**

- **Share with single users or whole organizations**

- **Granular access control for tight security**

Ecognize: File exchange
Communication & collaboration

Your files | Received files

File browser

[New file 📄] [New folder 📁]

Name	Last modified
⊞ 🗀 Water qual. measurements	16.10.2020, 22:50
⊟ 🗀 Reforestation project with MoE	16.10.2020, 23:55
⊟ 🗀 Draft report	16.10.2020, 22:51
📄 draft_report.docx	16.10.2020, 23:55

File/folder information ›

Name:	draft_report.docx
Owner:	admin (Anton Admin)
Created:	16.10.2020, 22:53
Last edited:	16.10.2020, 23:55
Last edited by:	admin (Anton Admin)

Actions

🗑 Delete   ➡ Share   🖉 Rename   📥 Download   📤 Update

Share settings 🖉

Users

Read access:
Write access:

Organizations

Read access: Ministry of the Environment Germany
Write access: Ministry of the Environment Germany

Ecognize: Social networking
Communication & collaboration

- **User profiles & user search**

- **Organization pages & search**

- **User groups**

- **Chat/messaging**

Further features & qualities

Social networking & community features

- **Event management**
  - Recruit volunteers for clean-ups, demonstrations; organize trainings, etc.
- **User groups**
- **Organization pages for presenting your organization & contact means through Ecognize**
- <u>Tentative</u> **gamification features**
  - User rankings and reputation system
  - Badges/trophys
  - Uses gamification & contests to motivate reporters to submit more reports
  - Organizations may run contests and/or hand out rewards to further increase user submissions

Further features & qualities

- **Democratic development**
  - **Users** can request new features or changes to platform
  - Democratic voting process determines which features/changes get added next

- **Highest security standards**

- **Free of charge!**

- **Modern & highly compatible technology stack**

- **Mobile reporting app can be branded by organizations**

Case studies

Only a few examples of how Ecognize can enable & help

Case studies

Case Study 1: Reporting of illegal logging and burning in the Amazon

- Ministry of Environment Brazil wishes to receive reports from locals, informs local population of reporting app

- Locals install reporting app from regular app stores onto their smartphones

- Locals can document (e.g., through photographs) and report illegal logging or land clearing **easily and anonymously** through mobile app

- Every report gets distributed to NGOs and government offices in Brazil, as well as international parent organizations

- Platform allows parties to discuss & coordinate measures

Case studies

Case Study 2: NGOs and environmental public institutions need collaboration platform

- Environmental NGOs and public offices (e.g. law enforcement or ministries) want to establish a temporary channel (e.g. for a project) or a permanent one (for continued better collaboration)

- Channel may be between

  - just one non-profit and one public institution

  - many organizations and public offices

- At one click, they can:

  - Set up private forums for themselves

  - Create a shared folder structure to securely exchange files and data

Case studies

Case Study 3: Professional exchange

- Professionals from one organization wish to receive input on questions from members of other organizations working in their field

- „Professional community" forums allow to ask professionals within their field in other organizations

- ## Case Study 4: Academic studies & journalist research

- Academics and journalists may use report database to study environmental issues

Case studies

Case Study 5: Field reporting

- Volunteers or investigators visit local Asian markets, shops or restaurants

- They take photos of potentially illegal items

- Upload reports – either to their account or anonymously

Next step: Opinions & feedback

Input needed from professional community

- **Ecognize is intended for environmental organizations (NGOs/non-profits, law enforcement, governmental offices, inter-governmental organizations...)**

- **Need feedback & input for improval from <u>potential future users</u>**
  - Vision 1: Is a global environmetal reporting platform & app a good idea? Will it be useful and helpful?
  - Vision 2: Is a cross-organization/cross-agency collaboration platform a good idea? Will it be useful and helpful?
  - How can these two visions be improved?

- **In other words: Should Ecognize continue? If yes, in which direction?**
  - **Current stage: proof of concept; <u>current feature set (web and smartphone app) ~50% complete</u>**

- **Test accounts can be provided upon request**

Thank you for your attention!
Any questions?