

THINK 2030

Science-policy
solutions for a more
sustainable Europe

#EUGreenWeek

Brussels Conference

MAY 15-17, 2019

Session 4.4

The Day After the 2019
Elections: What Role for
the New European
Parliament in Closing the
Implementation Gap?

Thursday, May 16, 2019

14:30-16:00

Room: Einstein

#ClosingTheGap

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CLOSING THE GAP: IMPLEMENTING EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

Within the context of the Think 2030 platform, IEEP is organizing an event during Green Week to shed light on the environmental policy implementation gap as part of debates ahead of the European elections.

Who are we?

The **Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP)** is a sustainability think tank. Working with stakeholders across EU institutions, international bodies, academia, civil society and industry, our team of policy professionals composed of economists, scientists and lawyers produce evidence-based research and policy insight. With over 40 years of experience, we are committed to **advancing impact-driven sustainability policy across the EU and the world**. Evaluating levels of implementation of EU environmental policies and their results is a significant part of our work.

The implementation gap

In 2014, the EU committed to the 7th **Environmental Action Plan (EAP)**, which sets a number of objectives for Europe to be achieved by 2020. As the end of the term approaches, the European Environment Agency (EEA) recently reported mixed progress towards environmental policy objectives relevant to the 7th EAP, concluding that **the EU was not on track to achieve some of its 2020 objectives**. Despite an ambitious framework, significant efforts in implementation of climate and environment policies are needed for the EU to make effective progress towards its commitments. Our recent evaluations of EU flagship environmental policies, such as the Common Agricultural Policy, the Birds and Habitats Directives, or the Water Framework Directive, has similarly showed the **significant implementation gap undermining EU environmental ambitions**.

The Think 2030 platform has produced 30 key recommendations for a more sustainable future, including one on this specific issue: **tackle gaps in the implementation of legislation and in accountability through more effective use of Member State and European enforcement mechanisms and a more systematically facilitated public access to environmental justice**.

Our work



Agriculture and Land Management - 2018

IEEP led an [evaluation of the Common Agricultural Policy's Pillar 1 greening measures](#) for the European Commission. The study focused on the implementation of the greening measures between 2015 and 2017 in the EU28, with a focus on 10 representative Member States. The evaluation found that overall the greening measures had only led to small changes in management practices, resulting in relatively limited and locally specific environmental and climate impacts. The study provided **key recommendations to improve the environmental performance of the greening measures.**

Biodiversity - 2019



The EU **Birds and Habitats Directives** form the cornerstone of Europe's nature conservation policy. IEEP and partners were tasked by the EU Commission with **identifying the main drivers of conservation success relating to the habitats and species that are the focus of these two directives.** The [recently published study](#) drew on Member States' monitoring and reporting data as well as on 53 in-depth case studies across the EU. **Findings confirmed the importance of having strong underlying environmental legislation and coherent governance, supported by adequate funding and the engagement of key stakeholders,** in reaching genuine improvements in habitats.

Case study: the Iberian Lynx

Iberian Lynx population collapsed during the 20th century because of agricultural and silvicultural intensification, which resulted in the homogenisation of landscapes and illegal hunting. Key drivers of the success of these conservation measures, notably implemented through LIFE projects, have been the initial research activities and the transfer of knowledge to species conservation managers, as well as the involvement of all stakeholders. The implementation of integrated management of the species in all its existing geographical distribution, as well as the launch of effective campaigns on the cultural value of the species and its critical conservation status, were also vital.



Green Economy - 2019

IEEP recently prepared a [report for the EU Commission](#) in the context of a project financed by DG Environment on the socio-economic assessment of water and marine policies. IEEP developed an **innovative methodology to assess costs and benefits of EU water policies, based on a bottom-up, multi-criteria approach.** Project partners tested the methodology in eight river basin districts across Europe, and demonstrated that the key challenge in analyzing water measures is data availability. **Measuring the benefits as well as the costs of measures needed for water bodies to reach good status is essential to progress on the implementation of the EU water Framework Directive.**

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ALLEN B, BALDOCK D, NANNI S, AND BOWYER C (2016) [Sustainability Criteria For Biofuels Made From Land and Non-Land Based Feedstocks](#). Report for The European Climate Foundation. Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP), London.

BOWYER C, TUCKER G, NESBIT M, BALDOCK D, ILLES A, PAQUEL K (2015) [Delivering Synergies Between Renewable Energy And Nature Conservation – Messages for Policy Making Up To 2030 And Beyond](#). Report for RSPB/Birdlife Europe by IEEP.

HART K AND BAS-DEFOSSEZ F (2018) [CAP 2021-27: Proposals For Increasing its Environmental And Climate Ambition](#). Report for NABU by IEEP.

LÓRÁNT A & ALLEN B (2019) [Net-Zero Agriculture In 2050: How To Get There?](#) Report by IEEP.

[Study to Analyse Differences in Costs of Implementing EU Policy](#) (2015). Report for the EU Commission by IEEP, Institute for Environmental Studies, ICF GHK, Naider.

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Environmental Governance - 2019



IEEP has been engaged in an **assessment of environmental governance across the 28 Member States** for DG Environment. We hope to be able to present information from the final report at the Green Week. We will also draw on the research in **commenting on some of the cross-cutting governance challenges**, and on the need for improved public engagement and participation in environmental decision-making.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Making The Circular Economy Work - Guidance For Regulators On Enabling Innovations For The Circular Economy \(Prevention And Recycling Of Waste\) \(2019\)](#). Guidance by Make it Work and IMPEL with support by Foxgloves Consultancy and IEEP.

[Principles On Drafting Provisions On Compliance Assurance In EU Environmental Law \(2015\)](#). Make It Work, contributed to by IEEP.

Full report download:
www.Think2030.eu

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Water, Marine & Fisheries - 2018

The EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive is the **first EU legislation instrument with a holistic approach to protecting the ocean**, which implementation cycle will come to an end in 2020. Within this context and as part of a two-year research study for the EU Commission, IEEP and partners produced a **report reviewing evidence of direct economic benefits of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) - and other spatial protection measures - to fisheries, maritime tourism and other blue economy sectors in Europe**. The report also **identified best practices** in terms of measures enabling the realization of such benefits.

Climate Change and Energy – 2016



Following the Volkswagen emission scandal – commonly known as Dieselgate - IEEP and partners were commissioned by the EU Parliament to produce a **report on the different regulatory frameworks, stakeholders and actions taken in the EU and the US in the field of emissions from the automotive sector**. The study reported on the US and EU respective emission standards **and their different approaches to standards implementation**. It also outlined the environmental outcomes of emission standards enforcement, and offered reflections on the potential future development of policy and legislation in this area.



Global Challenges and SDGs - 2018

As part of the **Think 2030 initiative**, IEEP published a **study** on the **impact of EU external and internal policies implementation on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the global level**. The study identifies **spillover effects of EU policies** beyond our borders and makes a range of recommendations for EU policy action to **improve SDGs delivery** in the global context, highlighting the **role of EU development policies**. Recommendations include identifying and adopting EU level indicators for tracking spillover effects and ensuring that EU trade delivers for all dimensions of sustainability.

Conclusions & recommendations for the next European Parliament

- Framing the post-2020 agenda around a clear recognition of the scale of transition needed, and the urgency of adopting necessary measures for climate, environment and broader sustainability.
- Priorities could be set out in an 8th Environmental Action Plan (EAP); but a step change in political ownership and priority is needed, with the European Council committing to implementation.
- Ensuring that the EU is a world leader on implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a clear strategy for how European action will enhance their delivery.
- Strengthening the European Parliament's role on the enforcement of European environmental law; by taking stock of the impact of enquiry committees in the 2014-2019 Parliament, and identifying new means of engaging in this key topic.
- Renewed efforts to improve the clarity of legislation, including through the use of the inter-institutional Joint Practical Guide on Drafting, and through the Make it Work drafting principles on environmental reporting, and compliance assurance.
- Ensuring that a greater reliance on subsidiarity does not lead to inaction or inadequate implementation, especially in the context of the proposed reform of key environmental policies (i.e. the proposal for a new Common Agricultural Policy foresees a transfer of responsibilities back to member states).
- Finding ways to highlight and reward good implementation efforts and practices by Member States, for instance within the cohesion policy or the semester process.
- Guaranteeing access to environmental justice and ensuring civil society's role in helping to identify and address implementation gaps is fully enabled.

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In October 2018, IEEP launched #Think2030, an evidence-based, non-partisan platform consisting of 100 leading policy experts from European think tanks, civil society, the private sector and local authorities. Its key objective is to identify science-policy solutions for a more sustainable Europe. The #Think2030 report, [30X30 actions for a sustainable Europe](#), is based on a series of papers covering all major European sustainability challenges, and contains recommendations for the future.