

# Newsletter

## Summer 2015

Editorial

# Environmental Policy: More resilient than it may seem

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## Editorial *by David Baldock*

At times in the past year, European environmental policy seemed to have almost disappeared behind a cloud, marginalised by a focus on other priorities including economic competitiveness, the crisis in the Eurozone and the search for new jobs. Without question the political atmosphere has changed, with palpable caution about new EU measures. Any proposals, particularly regulatory ones, face an array of challenging hurdles within the Commission before being presented to the Parliament and Council. At the same time, some important strands of existing legislation are under close scrutiny, within the REFIT programme and elsewhere.

Nonetheless, those expecting a prolonged eclipse of environmental policy or a substantive roll back of existing measures are likely to be surprised. Initial fears that the circular economy initiative would be abandoned have given way to a Commission promise to present a 'new, more ambitious circular economy strategy' later this year. Expectation, particularly amongst business interests, has escalated visibly. The Parliament has raised the stakes, calling for binding waste reduction targets, greater use of eco-design measures and systemic change to increase resource efficiency. The relevance of this initiative to a group of nations so heavily dependent on imported resources and raw materials is clear to almost everyone.

This is not an isolated example. Fierce debates are underway about the control of air pollution, both through better implementation of existing measures and potential new provisions in the National Emissions Ceiling Directive. The EU's 2030 GHG emission reduction targets and the recent Energy Union proposals will both require a new generation of policies simply to meet current aspirations, while the case for going further to build a low carbon economy can only get stronger. There is also a growing realisation of the need for a sharper focus on the marine environment, from habitat protection to fisheries management, not to mention controlling a burgeoning mass of marine litter.

Pressure for progress is not confined to the environmental community and business. The European Court of Auditors wants the Commission to do more to encourage national governments to put in place 'responsible waste water pricing' policies and proposes tougher provisions for the Sewage Sludge Directive. At the national level, a recent landmark ruling by the Dutch courts ordering the Government to make deeper cuts in GHG emissions could have ripple effects across several countries.

The UK referendum puts a further spotlight on the issue. Some who support an anti-regulatory agenda and see this as a reason for 'Brexit'. They have, however, not yet produced a reasoned argument about

why rolling back environmental standards would be desirable, popular or even feasible in areas subject to the EU single market. The Government has been silent on the topic, at least in public.

In short there continues to be a wide and, in many cases, urgent environmental agenda relevant to a panorama of interests. The debate about regulatory burdens is certainly more prominent than previously and includes unprecedented close examination of some highly strategic environmental measures. However, a substantive retreat from high environmental standards has yet to occur. Where the arguments for environmental progress are strong, as they are on so many fronts, protagonists should not be deterred by either political challenge or legitimate scrutiny.

*IN MEMORIAM*

### **John Pinder**

John Pinder, a notable pioneer of public policy analysis and one of IEEP's first Board members, died in the spring. In a long and active life he contributed to the European debate in an impressive range of books and institutional settings from the College of Europe to the Policy Studies Institute of which he was Director for many years. He was a wise, generous and invariably humane Trustee of the Institute from 1991 to 2001 and played a pivotal role in starting our work on climate policy. We honour his memory.

# Engaging with the better regulation debate



The European Commission's recently published 'Better Regulation' Communication sets out the principles of Better Regulation, and step-wise guides to conducting Impact Assessments and policy evaluations. There is concern from some quarters that the Better/Smart Regulation debate is a cloak for EU deregulation. IEEP has been closely involved in Better Regulation thinking and analysis since the early 2000s and is now supporting a Member State initiative, 'Make it Work', which aims to deliver smarter EU environmental law.

Starting with the basics, who is in favour of 'worse' regulation or 'dumb' regulation? On the other hand, a mere claim that a new approach is smarter or better means little in itself, since regulation is neither inherently good nor bad; it is a tool to achieve a purpose. There may or may not be better tools available. The design, interpretation and implementation of a given law, however, may be critical. Better Regulation initiatives in the EU should

examine which tools are needed to achieve an objective and whether the tools are well designed and appropriately implemented. It may be that revised regulation is needed, regulation is no longer necessary, or new regulation is appropriate to address important gaps.

Deregulation purely for its own sake is an ideological rather than a rational way to pursue agreed objectives. However, defending every dot and comma in the existing body of EU law, is also very difficult to justify. There is also a legitimate political fear that opening up a directive to revision will allow vested interests to attack it and undermine the interests of the EU's environment and citizens (deregulation disguised as better regulation) rather than lead to balanced political debate and rational consideration of its merits.

The **Make it Work project** is a joint venture of the German, Dutch and British environment ministries. It is focusing on the tools and procedures found across EU environmental law (inspection, monitoring, reporting, etc.), to see how to increase their coherence, ensure they are effective and reduce unnecessary burdens on Member States and business, but

without challenging existing environmental protection standards. The project therefore aims to enhance the delivery of EU environmental law, not threaten it. The project has already delivered drafting principles on how to set out compliance assurance requirements (e.g. inspections) in EU environmental law, explaining in detail what can be appropriately specified in EU law and how to frame provisions in legal texts. If these drafting principles were to be implemented across existing EU environmental legislation, implementation and enforcement would improve, so addressing a significant current area of weakness.

Genuine smart thinking on environmental law can lead to ideas for improvements and opportunities to deliver declared environmental objectives beyond the level achieved so far. Engaging with the Better/Smart Regulation debate can help to achieve this; dismissing the debate leaves it open to be hijacked by those just interested in deregulation, where the discourse is generally far from smart.

For more information contact:  
**Andrew Farmer.**



# PEGASUS – exploring new approaches to sustainable land management



**A** new EU research project PEGASUS was launched in March. The project, coordinated by IEEP, is funded through the European Commission's Horizon 2020 research programme with a view to develop new sustainable ways of thinking about farmland and forest management. Over thirty case studies are planned across the EU to consider the issues and find solutions that work in a range of farming and forest systems as well as along the supply chain.

PEGASUS (Public Ecosystem Goods and Services from land management – Unlocking the Synergies) is a European research project whose aim is to develop innovative approaches and new ways of thinking about the way farmland and forests are managed. The project aims to stimulate a long-lasting improvement in the provision of public goods and ecosystem services from agricultural and forest land in the EU.

The project, coordinated by IEEP, is funded through the European

Commission's Horizon 2020 research programme. It brings together 14 partners from 10 EU countries and will run for three years (2015-2018).

At the heart of PEGASUS is the recognition that EU's agricultural and forestry land provides a wide range of public goods and ecosystem services on which society depends, yet land use decisions often under-value such benefits. PEGASUS will develop innovative, practical ways of making these concepts accessible and operational: it will identify how, where and when innovative mechanisms and tools for policy makers, businesses and those managing rural areas can enhance the delivery of public goods and ecosystems services, thereby increasing the sustainability of primary production in pursuit of the EU2020 vision of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

PEGASUS plans to engage actively with a wide range of land managers and rural stakeholders across the EU. The first key opportunity for stakeholders to get involved is the PEGASUS national workshops, due to take place in ten Member States in September this year. In these workshops public and private stakeholders will come together

to share ideas, experiences and innovative ideas on how societal demand for public goods and ecosystem services can be used to harness their improved delivery in the EU's diverse range of farming and forestry management systems. National workshops will take place in Austria, Estonia, Portugal, Slovenia, Germany, France, UK, Netherlands, Italy and Czech Republic.

To subscribe to PEGASUS's newsletter or receive an invitation to the national workshops, please contact us at [pegasus@ieep.eu](mailto:pegasus@ieep.eu). To find out more about the project and the consortium, visit [PEGASUS's website](#).



Sign up for the  
**PEGASUS newsletter**



# Marine litter – an environmental and economic problem



**M**arine litter is a pressing global environmental challenge, with associated economic costs. A new study by IEEP for UNEP aims to improve understanding of the socio-economic dimensions of marine litter, and estimate the economic costs of action and inaction in areas such as producer responsibility, consumer behavior, fishing and aquaculture, tourism, and merchant shipping.

Marine litter is a pressing – and growing – global environmental challenge. This litter arises from sectors and activities including retail (e.g. plastic bags and bottles), aquaculture and fisheries (lost and discarded gear), shipping (accidental or deliberate waste releases), cosmetics and personal care products (plastic microbeads). Inadequate waste management practices and direct littering by individuals in coastal areas exacerbate the problem.

Marine litter items wash up on beaches and accumulate in the marine environment. This causes both environmental impacts and

economic costs. The environmental impacts include, for example, degradation of coastal and marine ecosystems, ingestion by or entanglement of marine species and spread of invasive alien species and pathogens that ‘surf’ on litter fragments. Economic costs are caused by revenue losses to fisheries, reduced tourist numbers, damage to ships and fishing gear, and need for beach clean-ups. All of this has negative effects on local communities and economic sectors.

IEEP is carrying out a study for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to improve understanding of the socio-economic dimensions of marine litter. The study will review and summarise existing data on the estimated costs of not addressing the marine litter problem, and of actions to prevent, reduce and clean up marine litter. It is anticipated that in many cases, the costs of action may be significantly lower than the costs of inaction.

The study looks at several themes: environmental damage and ecosystem degradation; producer responsibility and waste infrastructures; consumer behaviour and willingness to act; fishing and aquaculture; tour-

ism, aesthetic value and recreational opportunities; and merchant shipping. The study will look at the role of these areas in both creating and addressing marine litter. A series of case studies will also be developed, each looking at a specific marine litter issue in a specific part of the globe (including Korea, Australia, Chile and the Mediterranean), and identifying problems, solutions and best practices.

The study aims to identify promising solutions and approaches to addressing marine litter, and to contribute to the development of methods to calculate the costs of both inaction and action. It will be completed in early 2016, and feed in to a broader UNEP study on marine plastic debris which will be presented to the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) in Kenya in May 2016.

For further information and if you know of any interesting data, case examples or best practices that could feature in our study, please contact [Emma Watkins](#) or [Patrick ten Brink](#).



# Delivering low carbon transport fuels post 2020



**H**ow should EU policy support the transition to low carbon transport fuels post 2020? IEEP's recent report for the NGO Transport and Environment argues that future policies should be differentiated to tailor support towards specific objectives and technologies that offer the greatest potential for a low carbon future.

To reduce European transport's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, action will be needed on three fronts: to reduce the carbon intensity of the fuels consumed; to improve the energy efficiency of transport vehicles; and to improve the efficiency of the overall transport system. Despite this, the [European Commission's 2030 framework for climate and energy policies](#) rejected the continuation of existing targets aimed at supporting lower carbon transport fuels.

Important elements of the current policy framework have been problematic and controversial due to the shifts in technology and behaviour that have occurred, or conversely

have failed to materialise. The level of emission savings resulting from the expanded use of conventional biofuels has been widely questioned. Equally, however, a lack of emphasis at the EU level on curbing GHG emissions from transport fuels would arguably lead to stagnation.

[IEEP's recent report](#), drafted in collaboration with the International Council on Clean Transportation (ICCT) and Transport & Environment Policy Research (TEPR), analyses a range of policy tools and mechanisms that could be employed to deliver GHG emission reductions. It takes as its starting point an analysis of the need to decarbonise transport fuels and promote low carbon alternatives, and identifies the resulting policy priorities and changes in behaviour necessary post 2020.

It is possible to estimate the behaviour changes needed by the key actors in the fossil fuel, biofuel, electricity and hydrogen sectors to deliver decarbonisation. Setting out what individual transport fuel streams and associated actors need to deliver in Europe would increase clarity and provide a basis for innovation and uptake of low carbon

solutions. The report clearly highlights the distinct goals that need to be delivered to achieve decarbonisation, including: a GHG footprint for fossil fuels that declines over time; differentiation between biofuels based on the risk associated with their usage; and support for the expanded use of electric vehicles. It then examines the challenges and opportunities for integrating and prioritising these goals within a future EU policy framework.

For more information on IEEP's biofuels work, please contact **Catherine Bowyer**.



# Global influence and impacts of EU environmental policy



The expansion of EU environmental policy beyond its borders is gaining traction in academic and policy circles. Two IEEP papers presented at an expert workshop in Pretoria, South Africa, explore how the EU is embarking on new forms of external environmental governance in the areas of climate change and biodiversity conservation.

The EU is increasingly engaged in extending its environmental policies and approaches beyond its borders. This is being done through various channels, from direct incentives in the context of external policies and assistance programmes to indirect forms of influence such as diplomatic efforts, leadership by example and sharing of best practice.

The extension of the EU's environmental governance beyond its borders is gaining traction in academic and policy circles and was the focus of a recent workshop on the 'External dimension of the EU's environmental policy' held in Pretoria, South Africa in early June. The workshop was part of the 2015 Governance

Innovation Week organised by the Centre for the Study of Governance Innovation, University of Pretoria.

IEEP researchers presented two analytical papers at the workshop as part of our work on global solutions and challenges. The first paper explores whether and to what extent EU and Member State efforts on market-based instruments (MBIs) to support climate change objectives (emissions trading, carbon taxes, fossil fuel subsidy reform and renewable energy support schemes) have facilitated, inspired or influenced the design and implementation of similar instruments in non-EU countries. Preliminary conclusions indicate that the role and influence of the EU and its Member States varies, with other countries and regions sometimes drawing on the EU's experience to inform the design of their own systems or to build support for domestic action. Since the EU has also drawn on insights and experiences in other countries for policy ideas and design, the process has been one of mutual learning.

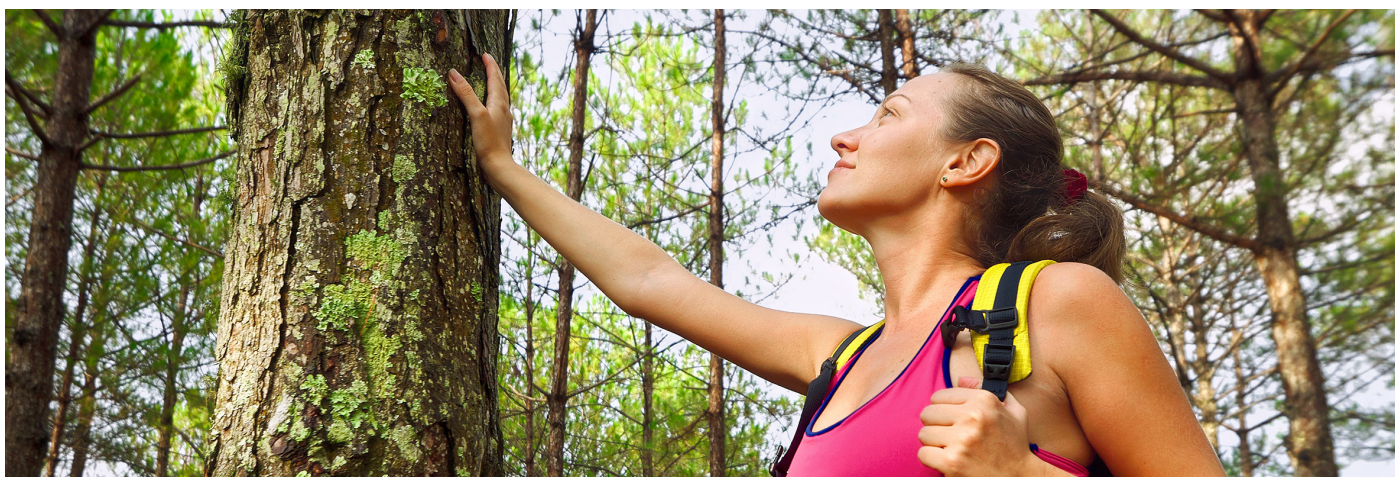
The second paper explores the mix of EU measures that support the conservation and sustainable use of

biodiversity and ecosystem services globally. It also investigates some of the key challenges to achieving global biodiversity targets, including mobilising resources and addressing policy incoherence. The paper identifies a wide range of EU mechanisms to support global biodiversity conservation, ranging from setting international targets to playing a proactive role in achieving them. The EU is an active party to global biodiversity agreements and a member of several transnational policy and expert networks linked to target setting. The EU also has several concrete mechanisms for external action (e.g. funding instruments) through which it helps countries to implement the agreed conservation objectives. It is, however, difficult to assess how effective this rather varied collection of instruments is in practice.

The IEEP papers will be revised to take into account discussions at the workshop and will be available later this year. For further information please contact **Sirini Withana** and **Marianne Kettunen**.



# Can nature provide the public health care of the future?



**P**ublic health and the environment are intrinsically linked. Environmental degradation has negative impacts on human health, whilst the conservation of nature and green spaces can deliver multiple health benefits. An IEEP-led study explores these links and how they could be integrated into public health strategies.

Policies and strategies for public health tend to focus on treatment via pharmaceuticals and hospitalisation, ignoring the key role that a healthy environment and nature can play in the prevention of illnesses and the potential of nature-based solutions to health problems.

In an ongoing project for DG Environment, a team of researchers led by IEEP aims to demonstrate the health and social benefits of nature. More than a hundred case studies covering all 28 EU Member States demonstrate the role of green spaces in providing relief from poor air quality, heat stress and noise pollution. The case studies also show clear human health benefits

from nature, linked to providing mobility or recreation opportunities and spaces for rehabilitation and stress reduction. The positive impacts of nature on public health are often coupled with other socio-economic benefits such as job creation, volunteering and education, and cultural and aesthetic appreciation. Protected areas, such as the EU Natura 2000 network, can play an important role in providing all these benefits.

The insights related to the health and societal benefits of nature show that investment in the conservation of biodiversity and natural capital not only helps to alleviate environmental concerns but also represents a step towards healthy, resilient and sustainable societies. For nature to be seen as an integral element supporting public health, a shift is needed towards environmentally sustainable policy and decision-making. Prioritising prevention over treatment, by creating public spaces which maximise well-being and facilitate healthy lifestyles, requires active input from stakeholders from multiple disciplines and governance levels.

Early findings of the study were presented at [EU Green Week](#) in June. The team is still looking for examples of good practice and innovative partnerships at national level, including expanding the network of stakeholders in preparation for a dedicated workshop later this year.

To express an interest in the workshop or for further information please contact: [Jean-Pierre Schweitzer](#) and [Konar Mutafoglu](#).

# Introducing ...

Meet the latest additions to IEEP's multidisciplinary team of policy researchers.



**Anne Maréchal**

*Policy Analyst*

Anne holds an MSc in agriculture, food and environment and a Master in European business and management. She joined IEEP in 2015 as the project manager of the Horizon 2020 PEGASUS research project and she is involved in a range of other projects in the areas of land management, agricultural policy and rural development. Prior to joining IEEP, Anne completed a 'Bluebook' traineeship at the European Commission (DG AGRI) and worked for over 3 years as an economic and policy consultant in the agri-food sector for EU institutions, national governments and NGOs. Over the years, Anne has developed extensive knowledge of agricultural and rural development policies and experience analysing their economic, social and environmental impacts of across the EU Member States.



**Mia Pantzar**

*Report & Proposal  
Production Assistant*

Mia joined IEEP in April 2015 to work mainly on communications. With a special interest in biodiversity issues and conservation policy, she has specialised in marine management in the EU, including the new CFP and the MSFD. Mia has an interdisciplinary academic background with an MSc in Environmental Management and Policy and BSc in Environmental Science. Prior to joining IEEP, Mia has worked as a writer, researcher and analyst, for example on renewable energy in the Middle East and Northern Africa and strategic transport planning for the City of Melbourne. She has also been a consultant for a number of companies and organisations in graphic design, copy editing and report production.



**Jean-Pierre  
Schweitzer**

*Policy Analyst*

Jean-Pierre joined IEEP as a Policy Analyst in spring 2015 following an internship with the Environmental Economics Programme in Brussels. In 2014 he completed a master in Berlin in European Politics focusing on environmental policy and sustainability. Previously he studied Geography at Worcester College, Oxford. Whilst completing his masters he worked at the German office of Climate-KIC supporting their climate innovation team. At IEEP, he is currently engaged with projects covering issues such as the socioeconomics of marine litter and the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals.



**Alejandro Colsa**

*Report & Proposal  
Production Assistant*

Alejandro joined IEEP in April 2015 to support the operations team, coordinating the development of the institute's reports and proposals. He previously completed an internship on environmental and health policy at the World Health Organisation in Geneva. He holds a Masters degree in Natural Resources and Environment – with a focus on environmental justice and Science, Technology and Public Policy – from the University of Michigan and as a Fulbright scholar. Previously, Alejandro received an MSc on Environmental Sustainability from University of Edinburgh.



# IEEP Conferences and Events



## Health and Social Benefits of Nature and Biodiversity Protection

*Brussels (Belgium), autumn 2015 (date to be confirmed)*

As part of a study for the European Commission, IEEP will organise an EU-level workshop dedicated to understanding the health and social benefits of nature and biodiversity protection. The workshop will bring together a wide range of participants, including representatives of the environmental, health and social sectors. Attendance is by invitation only. To express an interest in attending, please contact **Jean-Pierre Schweitzer** and **Konar Mutafoglu**.

## PEGASUS workshop series

*Location and dates to be confirmed*

IEEP is coordinator of a three-year EU Horizon 2020 research project – PEGASUS (“Public Ecosystem Goods and Services from land management – Unlocking the Synergies”). In September 2015, PEGASUS will organise and run 10 national workshops in 10 EU countries. For further information and to express interest in participating, please contact **Kaley Hart** or **Anne Maréchal**.

## Towards a Sustainable Bioeconomy. Innovative Methods and Solutions for the Agriculture and Forest Sectors

*Barcelona (Spain), 21-23 October 2015*

IEEP will present its work on cascading use of biomass in the two-day conference ‘Towards a Sustainable Bioeconomy’ organised by Careers in Sustainability Excellence – CASTLE. This work, carried out in the context of a study for the European Commission on the optimised cascading use of wood, will feature in the ‘Science-Policy-Practice interaction day’ of the conference on 22 October. For further information about IEEP’s involvement in the conference and our work on cascading use, please contact **Ben Allen**. The full programme is available on the conference website, [www.castle-itn.eu/conference](http://www.castle-itn.eu/conference).

# IEEP Books and Publications



## **How is favourable conservation status being defined across the EU?**

Friday, 15 May 2015

ACCESS PUBLICATION

The core objective of the EU nature Directives is to achieve a favourable conservation status of European protected habitats and species. The IEEP report explores how the criteria for conservation status have been interpreted and implemented across Member States.

## **New open access book on marine litter**

Tuesday, 02 June 2015

ACCESS BOOK

A new book, 'Marine Anthropogenic Litter', has been published comprising 16 chapters on various aspects of the complex issue of litter in the world's oceans. Researchers from IEEP contributed a chapter on the economics of marine litter. The whole book is free to view online.

## **Results-based agri-environment schemes: new report and guidance handbook available**

Friday, 05 June 2015

ACCESS PUBLICATION

Are you interested in developing and implementing a results-based payment scheme for farmland biodiversity? Together with experts from across Europe, IEEP has produced a range of useful resources to guide the future development of results-based agri-environment schemes in the EU and beyond.

## **Tracking biodiversity expenditure in the EU budget**

Monday, 29 June 2015

ACCESS PUBLICATION

The European Commission is in the process of developing a methodology to track biodiversity related expenditure in the EU budget. This IEEP-led report outlines a methodology for biodiversity tracking in the EU.

## **How to stimulate a bio-economy based on waste? – A study for the UK Government**

Monday, 29 June 2015

ACCESS PUBLICATION

Waste resources have the potential to provide a core component of developing bio-economies across the globe. A new IEEP report reviews how waste has been incorporated into existing bio-economy strategies, and the conditions that have enabled this.

## **Delivering Low Carbon Transport Fuels Post 2020**

Monday, 13 July 2015

ACCESS PUBLICATION

How should EU policy support the transition to low carbon transport fuels post 2020? A new IEEP-led report argues that future policies should be differentiated to tailor support towards specific objectives and technologies that offer the greatest potential for a low carbon future.





Editors: [Marianne Kettunen](#),  
[Silvia Nanni](#) and [Emma  
Watkins](#)

Production: [Mia Pantzar](#)  
Design: [Joana Aguas](#)

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