

Preface

This volume contains papers presented in a workshop of international experts in September 2008 in Berlin. The experts discussed how environmental consequences of EU legislation can be incorporated in a more effective way. In other words, this contribution focuses on the question of which measures can strengthen the consideration of environmental effects in the EU impact assessment procedure and in the subsequent legislative decision-making process. This allows drawing conclusions for the impact assessment process in Germany.

This volume begins with an introductory paper (Bizer/Lechner/Führ) which served as the basis for discussion in our workshop. The questions raised in this paper are addressed by the authors of the subsequent chapters. Stephen White (DG Environment, EU-Commission) discusses the impact assessment from an internal perspective within the Commission. Pendo Maro (European Environmental Bureau) reviews the impact assessment practice from the perspective of an environmental NGO. Martin Schmidt et al. discuss the potential for more formalism to strengthen environmental issues within impact assessments and favour a checklist. Clive George reviews the current state of rules within the EU Commission and suggests an additional chapter with regard to environmental impacts in the Annexes of the impact assessment guidelines. Martin Drechsler analyses methods of comparing regulatory options, such as cost-benefit analysis and multi-criteria analysis with respect to their informational demands. Finally we offer our conclusion of the discussion in the workshop and compare these with the new impact assessment guidelines from 15 January 2009. The latest guidelines certainly add to the previous improvements and reveal that introducing impact assessments as a form of governance is rather a long-term process than a state to be achieved within a few years. This should be taken in consideration when designing the next development stage of the German impact assessment procedure.

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