

THE ACTIONS PROGRAMMES IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENT AND THE INTEGRATED PRODUCT POLICY

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Abstract:

One of the most important strategies to achieve the objectives of sustainable development is to promote a coherent legal system in the European Union. The trends and priorities are mapped and monitored under the Programme of Action on the environment.

The environmental Action Programmes are documents underpinning EU environmental policy. The first of these programs was adopted by the European Council in 1972 and was followed by five others. These action programs are actually a combination of medium-term programs, coupled with a strategic approach and is characterized by a vertical and sectoral environmental problems. Since 1973, the European Community action program in the field of environment have become an increasingly important role.

The European Community Treaty of 1986 is the legal basis of EU environmental policy.

The Article 174 outlines environmental policy objectives and defines its purpose - ensuring a high level of environmental protection taking into account the diversity of situations in different regions of the European Union.

The underlying objectives of EU environmental policy, under Article 174, are:

- the preserve, protect and improve the environment;
- the protection of human health;
- the rational use of natural resources;
- a promoting measures at international level to treat regional environmental issues.

The Article 175 identifies the appropriate legislative procedures to this end and establishes the decision-making in environmental policy.

The Article 176 allows Member States to adopt and stricter standards if it is deemed important and if it is justified.

The "Sustainable development" is mentioned early in Art. 2 of the Treaty of Amsterdam Treaty which underlies the formation of the European Community.

The Article 6 promotes sustainable development as a cross-cutting policy of the European Union, highlighting the need to integrate environmental protection requirements into the definition and implementation of EU sectorial policies.

The Article 95 of the Treaty of Amsterdam is the harmonization of legislation on health, environment and consumer protection in the Member States, while allowing the inclusion of national legal provisions in order to better protect the environment.

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Introduction

During its long history, the man has managed to develop mental the abilities and organizational help him to gain control over the forces of nature gradually and have a significant impact on the environment. A gradual environmental change occurred across all ages, but in the last two centuries, the industrial revolution led to the rapidly changing environment due to unprecedented exploitation of natural resources. Fortunately, environmental awareness is increasing in almost all countries.

More and more countries are implementing legislative regulations to reduce the negative environmental impact. The evolution of environmental policy and changes to it over time are reflected not only the objectives and priorities, but also the tools for its implementation. In this sense we can speak of three main types of instruments: the legislative, technical and economic-financial.

A. legislative instruments creates the legal framework of Community environmental policy and are the existing legislation in this area which constitutes the *acquis communautaire*.

B. The technical tools ensure compliance with environmental quality standards and using the best technology available. These technical tools are:

- the standards and emission limits governing the environmental pollution;
- a use of best available technology (Best Available Technologies - BAT) to prevent and control industrial pollution;
- the eco-labeling - to promote products with a reduced environmental impact.

C. The main financial instrument of environmental policy is LIFE program, which was launched in 1992 in order to co-finance environmental projects in the Member States and acceding countries.

The LIFE is divided into three thematic components: LIFE - Nature, LIFE - Environment and LIFE - Third countries, all three aiming to improve the environmental situation, but each with separate budgets and priorities. LIFE-funded projects must meet a set of criteria that reflect their relevance and reliability:

- to be of European interest and contribute to LIFE objectives;
- to be implemented by serious partners in terms of financial and technical;
- to be feasible in terms of technical proposals and in terms of cost-effectiveness; to promote sustainable development at international, national or regional level;
- to propose solutions to major environmental problems.

The EU requirements on the impact of chemicals on environmental quality increases more and more. The most advanced approach to reduce the negative environmental impact used in the European Union is now "integrated pollution prevention and control."

The Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control concept introduced by Directive 96/61 / EC, while referring to the three elements of the environment: air quality, water quality and waste management. This Directive sets emission limit values based on the best available technologies and stresses the importance of the geographical location of industrial plants and local environmental conditions. In other words, the environmental capacity of a particular place to tolerate certain levels of emissions is crucial. In this connection was established a forum for the exchange of information, which aims at achieving and maintaining the best possible degree of harmonization of laws in this field in the Member States. This forum is composed of representatives of the European Commission, the Member States delegates and representatives of industry and non-governmental organizations working in the field of environmental protection.

The implementation of Directive 96/61 / EC concerning integrated pollution prevention and control requires some investment costs for cleaner technologies. All activities covered by the Directive requires permits for discharge of waste and emissions to air and water. Member States shall ensure that authorizations required emission limits and contain all appropriate preventive measures to avoid pollution. The provisions of this Directive relate inter alia to:

- identification of sites covered by the Directive;
- developing appropriate institutional infrastructure to issue permits for industrial operators and disseminate scientific data needed to manage, control and environmental management;
- provision of public information on how to licensing.

It covers also the characteristics of industrial installations based on a system of permits that industrial operators must obtain from the local authorities. These permits establish emission limits to ensure a certain level of environmental protection. Advantages of the directive on integrated pollution prevention and control are reflected in many areas:

- the health - the benefits are commensurate with the level of emission reduction;
- in the economic - environmental improvement will have a positive impact on industries affected by pollution in those areas (eg fishing, etc.);
- socially - reducing air, water and soil by industrial cleaner will bring numerous social benefits, primarily by improving the quality of life.

In addition, there is a horizontal legislation by Directive 85/337 / EEC as amended by Directive 97/11 / EEC on environmental impact assessment sets out the requirements for environmental impact assessment before a development project, public or private, with significant environmental achievement to be agreed. Directive 90/313 / EEC on public access to environmental information also requires public authorities to provide public access to this information.

The 5th Action Programme: Towards Sustainable Development

Improving the quality of the environment is one of the key objectives of global society and also at EU level. Although, in recent years there has been some progress in the field of environmental protection, still many goals to be achieved in order to achieve this goal. To determine the correct targets to be met, the European Environment Agency has made in the context of "the 5th Action Programme in the field of the environment", an overall assessment of the environmental impact they have had in recent actions years.

The results of the evaluation showed improvements in urban air quality by reducing the degradation of the ozone layer. This shows among other things that the Directive on the limitation of emissions of vehicles is beginning to bear fruit.

Also, stood improve surface water quality as a result of better control of wastewater and increasing recycling.

Another problem is that the benefits of so-called "clean technology" or "green" are outweighed by the need to increase energy consumption and use of natural resources. Waste management and management of hazardous chemicals remain also important issues facing society.

This assessment has revealed another aspect, namely the need to amend environmental legislation in order to ensure effective policies in terms of costs. One of the most important results of the 5th Action Programme in the field of environment was contributing to the strengthening of the provisions in the Treaty of Amsterdam on sustainable development and integration of environmental issues into other economic and social policies. An overall assessment highlighted the need for citizens to get involved and support the accession process more sustainable development.

At EU level, the 5th Action Programme in the field of environment "Towards Sustainable Development" was the adoption of provisions "Agenda 21", drawing frame policies to be implemented in each Member State legislation. Its principles are based on the "precautionary approach" (precautionary approach) concept of shared responsibility and the "polluter pays" principle.

The 5th Action Programme in the field of environment identified several priority areas of environmental policy including:

- a long-term management of the resources of the European Community;
- integrated approach to combating pollution and reducing the quantities of waste generated;
- reducing energy consumption of non-renewable sources; development of efficient transport, cleaner technology;
- improving the quality of urban environment;
- improving health and safety in particular in relation to the management of hazardous industries, nuclear safety and radiation protection.

Another novelty brought by the 5th Action Programme the environment is also changing the direction of environmental policy by a policy based on consensus through consultation with stakeholders in the decision-making process and the transition from a control-based approach to one based on prevention and operationalized through the use of tools economic and fiscal.

This program takes a horizontal approach with regard to those sectors of industry with significant environmental impacts: energy, tourism, transport and agriculture. Another important point of this program is the recognition that the industry should not be seen as part of the problem - one that uses natural resources and energy, generating waste and wealth - and as part of the solution.

To achieve these goals must use all the tools available in the market (economic instruments, taxation and voluntary agreements of industry), to instruments which support the horizontal approach (research, education) and financial ones such as LIFE.

The 6th Action Programme: Our choice, our future

The 6th Environmental Action Programme ambient (2004-2014), called "Our choice, our future" materialized as a result of the overall evaluation process under the previous Action Programme. The 6th Action Programme also established a wide range of political and economic instruments to promote environmental protection. These have been identified four priority areas of action which define the environmental policy:

- a climate change and global warming - is to reduce emissions that lead to the greenhouse effect by 8% compared to 1990 (according to the Kyoto Protocol);
- the nature protection and biodiversity - aims to protect endangered species and their habitat in Europe;
- a health and the environment - aims to provide a safe environment without risk to human health and thereby improve their quality of life;
- the conservation of natural resources and waste management aims increasing recycling and prevention thereof.

This program emphasizes the importance of the concept of integrated product policy which promotes organic products, results of processes "environmentally friendly". The Integrated Product Policy is one of the most innovative elements of the 6th Action Programme. Its purpose is to meet the requirements and needs of consumers with as few resources and environmental risks while preventing waste generation directly from the source.

The 6th Environmental Action Programme surrounding believes also that environmental standards play an important role for the technical implementation of environmental legislation. They can be defined as formal processes, such as ISO or as voluntary agreements between industry and authorities.

The seven thematic strategies proposed by the 6th Action Programme covering important aspects of the environment: soil protection, protection and preservation of the marine environment in the context of sustainable use of pesticides, air pollution, urban environment, recycling, management and use of resources in a sustainable development perspective.

The main priority of the 6th Action Programme in the field of environment, based on the principles set out above, the implementation and enforcement of environmental legislation on all member states of the European Union. In addition, emphasis must be placed on more serious problems in recent years such as, for example, climate change. The implementation of the *acquis communautaire* in the applicant countries is also a priority with the difficulties faced by these countries.

In this context, it is very important to promote legislative coherence and harmonization of all these regulations.

In order to avoid creating a bureaucratic burdens existing regulations were revised in their entirety and articles were identified for improvement. One of the conclusions that have been drawn for a better approach in the future is to try and extension of the "risk principle" legislation currently in preparations and substances, and environmental legislation on air quality, water or waste management. The principle of human and environmental risk reduction leads to levels of security.

It is therefore necessary to identify measures of risk measurement and finding solutions to minimize this risk. The goal is to find the most effective ways of allocating resources to protect humans and the environment. The most important horizontal initiatives that impact on various sectors of environmental policies can be considered:

- the Integrated Product Policy (integrated product policy) that takes into account environmental impacts throughout the entire life cycle of a product;
- an environmental standards, which play an important role in the implementation of environmental legislation. These standards can be formal, defined by international bodies as the International Organization for Standardization or have voluntary, as a result of agreements between industry and authorities;
- the eco-labeling - is a way of labeling information to consumers about environmentally friendly products and enables them at the same time, to make informed choices. This eco-label is awarded only to those products that meet the general and specific criteria established for each category;
- a voluntary agreements concluded between industry and public authorities can provide effective means for achieving specific goals. By applying the principle of shared responsibility is intended to apply to local environmental solutions, temporary specific problems faster than through legislation. Therefore, the EU Environment Commission supports voluntary agreements whenever they could.

Conclusions

The support the implementation of an integrated product is the main priority of the 6th Action Programme. Integrated Product Policy is based on an approach that begins by examining how to improve performance of a product in terms of its impact on the environment in an efficient manner in terms of cost. Integrated Product Policy are as strategy since June 2003 and is also considered as being the one of the most innovative elements of the 6th Action Programme.

The Integrated Product Policy is one of the pillars of Environmental Action Programmes. Traditionally, environmental policies focused on specific environmental impact of certain industrial activities, with the opportunity to move environmental issues from a stage of the product life cycle to another. Therefore, the Integrated Product Policy seeks to improve performance in terms of the environment at all stages of the product life cycle.

The industry believes that major elements:

- Achieve a consistent shapes, clear and stable legal framework to ensure a competitive position in the global market;
- indication of specific and measurable targets for industry and consumers that do not distort the functioning of the market dynamics at regional or international level;
- providing a framework for information for consumers to choose knowingly products best meet their needs;
- providing tools available to stimulate continuous improvement and innovation in order to obtain products with the lowest possible impact on the environment;
- shared responsibility between all stakeholders, so as to maximize environmental benefits and minimize costs.

After the EU Commission published the "Green Paper Integrated Product Policy" appeared critics who argue about the general framework of integrated product policy that will lead to results. Following public consultation, the Commission adopted on 18 June 2013 a new strategy, arguing for a more voluntary approach and closer collaboration with industry. To implement this strategy, the Commission focuses on:

- establishment of framework conditions: promotion of voluntary agreements, organic products through eco-labeling and life cycle assessment of a product, etc .;
- product specific approach: identification of the harmful environmental and development of pilot projects for these products, after consultations with industry and stakeholders.

The Integrated Product Policy seeks to minimize the damage they cause some products an environment throughout their life cycle and proposes a voluntary approach to promote "green products" and close cooperation with stakeholders.

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