

A citizen-centric approach to evidence-based decision-making under the European Green Deal

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‘A profound transformation’

- Profound transformation of EU economy to achieve climate and sustainability objectives
- decoupling of economic growth from resource use
- ‘growth strategy’
- transform EU into fair and prosperous society
- protect EU natural capital
- protect health/well-being of its people from risk of environmental harm
- ‘deeply transformative’



Criticisms

- Cannot meet environmental and economic objectives
- Externalises environmental impacts
- Prioritises private investment over the public interest
- Places blind faith in technology
- Facilitates greenwashing
- May increase regional inequality



**CONFLICT
CONTROVERSY**

Research questions

- must be '**just and inclusive**'
- need for careful attention to **potential trade-offs** between economic, environmental and social objectives
- European Pillar of Social Rights: ensure '**no one is left behind**'

BUT...

- **How** will the social and human rights impacts of these sweeping new laws be taken into account in the decision-making process?
- What **other types of evidence** must be considered?
- How to avoid **technocratic** styles of decision-making?



Overview of the evidentiary question

Current approach

- Emphasis on scientific data from Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and economic data
- Some public consultation (but how is feedback incorporated into decisions)?

What more do we need?

- How will what is ‘just and inclusive’ be determined?
- How will social and human rights impacts be ascertained?
- *Will* they even be considered?



Evidence generated by impact assessment

Impact assessment (IA) defined

- IA is a **structured process** for **obtaining information** about the biophysical, social, economic and/or institutional **consequences** of proposed actions, and considering its implications within decision-making.
- SIA is ‘the processes of analysing, monitoring and managing the **intended and unintended social consequences**, both positive and negative, of planned interventions (policies, programs, plans, projects) and any social change processes invoked by those interventions’.
- ‘**Social impact**’ can include anything linked to a project that affects or concerns impacted individuals or stakeholder groups, directly or indirectly, whether experienced or felt in a perceptual (cognitive) sense, or a corporeal (bodily, physical) sense.

Examples

- culture and way of life
- community cohesion and stability
- impacts upon political systems
- environmental and health concerns
- impacts upon personal and property rights
- cost of living
- fears, aspirations, expectations
- deprivations of access to food, water, health, education, or work
- risks to life or security of person
- cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment
- discrimination
- restrictions of movement

Implications for Green Deal decision-making

- ***Re-frame*** evidentiary requirements for Green Deal
- ***Mandate*** comprehensive social and human rights impact assessment
- ***Map out*** stages of SIA and HRIA onto key decision-making stages in rollout of Green Deal:
 - ✓ policy-making
 - ✓ legislative enactment
 - ✓ implementation on a sector, project or community level



Questions and feedback?

Thank you!



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