EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 and the European Semester

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The European Structural Investment Funds – "ESIF" = ERDF – ESF - CF - EAFRD – EMFF

Governed by Common Provisions Regulation CPR which provides for:
- a "Partnership Agreement" at national level
- Alignment to EUROPE 2020 through "Thematic Objectives" (TOs)
- Macro economic conditionality

Fund specific regulations translate TOs into fund specific contexts and define concentration of resources on themes, etc.

Negotiations influenced by:
- 2012 Commission position papers and
- Country Specific Recomendations (& SWDs)
Thematic objectives

1. Strengthening research, technological development and innovation
2. Enhancing access to, and use and quality of, information and communication technologies
3. Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises, the agricultural sector
4. Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors
5. Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management
6. Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency
7. Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures
8. Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility
9. Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty and any discrimination
10. Investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning
11. Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and an efficient public administration
12. Technical Assistance
Environmental integration

- TFEU Art. 11 "Environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Union’s policies and activities, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development."
- Art. 8 (CPR) on sustainable development: one of the established cross-cutting principles of the CP.
- Art. 48 (CPR) on ex-ante evaluation: strategic environmental assessment 'environmental pillar'.
- Article 91 (CPR) on major projects: an analysis of the environmental impact, taking into account cc adaptation and mitigation needs, and disaster resilience.
Mainstreaming environment: SEA

Make the most of SEA!
- early (parallel) start of SEA
- environmental requirement mainstreamed throughout OP
- environment viewed as an economic driver
- review of OP if negative environmental effects
- close collaboration & dialogue between OP & SEA teams
- structured consultation approach
- environmental project selection criteria
- SEA monitoring measures
Mainstreaming environment: ex-ante conditionalities

“Ex ante conditionalities” described in Article 19 of Regulation (EC) No. 1303/2013. The specific conditionalities described in detail in the Annexes and also cover compliance with other environmental Directives e.g. requiring water pricing regimes and waste management plans to be in place. For transport infra-structure a project can only be allocated Trans European Network (TEN-T) funding if the development in question is supported by an SEA compliant plan.

Example: EIA/SEA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for fulfilment</th>
<th>EIA/SEA</th>
<th>Water</th>
<th>Waste</th>
<th>SEA for transport plans</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arrangements for the effective application of EIA and SEA Directives</td>
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<td>Arrangements for training and dissemination of information for staff</td>
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<td>Arrangements to ensure sufficient administrative capacity</td>
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Criteria fulfilled?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria fulfilled?</th>
<th>YES/NO</th>
<th>Elements of non-fulfilment</th>
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Mainstreaming environment: consultations on PAs and OPs

- Position Papers
- EU environmental legislation
- EU policies
- PAFs
- Horizontal integration across TOs
- Management arrangements
- Partnership principle
- LIFE
- ...
EU Semester

The first for ireland
Partnership Agreement

Pas may provide clear links with one or more CSRs. Main themes raised are: research and innovation, energy efficiency, waste, healthcare, public administration capacity/reform
Links between economic/social Semester themes and environmental themes

1. Fiscal policy & taxation
   - Pension reform
   - Health care costs
   - Financial sector
   - Tax shift from labour to environment
     - e.g. landfill tax
   - Phase out env. harmful subsidies
     - e.g. fossil fuel subsidies

2. Labour market/education
   - Participation
   - Poverty & social exclusion

3. Promoting growth & compet."
Links between economic/social Semester themes and environmental themes

4. Research & innovation
   - Eco-innovation

5. Modernisation public admin.
   - Impact Assessment system

   - Absorption of EU funds
   - Judicial system
   - Business environment
Greening the European Semester

- A network of national environment ministries' Semester contacts
- Meetings in November 2013 and February 2014 on the greening of the European Semester
- 05.06.2014: Greening the Semester session at Green Week
- Involvement of environmental NGOs (e.g. WWF, EEB, Green Budget Europe, Bank Watch)
Better policy coherence

7 EAP may support a stronger environmental dimension in the Semester:

- 7EAP has a legal status and is a common responsibility of MSs and the Commission;
- Contains references to the Semester:
  - Integrating environment and climate-related considerations into the European Semester process;
  - Developing measurement and benchmarking methodologies by 2015 for resource efficiency of land, carbon, water and material use and assessing the appropriateness of the inclusion of a lead indicator and target in the European Semester.
  - phasing out environmentally harmful subsidies at Member State and EU level, guided by the Commission, using an action-based approach, inter alia via the European Semester.
Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 and the Semester

Cohesion Policy can help funding the priorities of the EU Semester

Both instruments are about implementing EU 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

Synergy: end 2013, we can support environmental MS-priorities in Partnership Agreements/OPs through our input in Semester SWDs

Art.21 proposed CPR: Macro-economic conditionality -

- Implementation of Semester CSRs may require Commission pressure to change Partnership Agreements or OPs
- This is a risk (if wrong CSRs) and an opportunity (if right CSRs)
References:

**Regional Policy**
- EIA / SEA Homepage (Guidance on the implementation of the SEA Directive): [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/home.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/home.htm)

**European Semester**
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