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Environmental Policy Integration: How will we recognize it when we see it? The case of green innovation policies in Norway

Taking the definition of environmental policy integration (EPI) and benchmarks proposed by Lafferty (2004), the paper discusses one method that allows for an evaluation of EPI with respect to green innovation policies in Norway.

EPI has a horizontal and a vertical dimension. The horizontal dimension refers to cross-sectoral strategies for environmental protection. The vertical dimension refers to particular sectoral efforts, in other words a 'greening' of sectoral policies. A 'constitutional mandate', an 'over-arching strategy' for the sectoral domain, a 'national action plan' and a 'responsible executive body' are proposed as 'baseline' requirements for achieving (and assessing) horizontal, cross-sectoral integration of environmental goals. With regard to the vertical dimension the combination of a 'sectoral strategy' for change and an 'action plan' are the proposed key initiatives.

Using the benchmarks as evaluation criteria, the paper discusses to what degree Norwegian innovation policy and environmental policy are integrated. The discussion is illustrated with efforts undertaken by the Government as well as the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy.

Our findings indicate that vertical environmental policy integration is promoted, but specific and direct efforts on the promotion of green innovations are very limited - if existing at all. On the horizontal dimension little can be documented. This does not necessarily indicate that green innovations are not promoted in Norway. However, efforts undertaken by the public sector, the Norwegian Government and particularly the three Ministries studied, confirm that there is a large potential for strengthening public policy integration for the promotion of green innovations in Norway.