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## **Greening the European Union's decision-making machinery: Environmental Policy Integration and Sustainable Development in the Council of Ministers and European Council**

The European Union (EU) has long been formally committed to the integration of environmental policy requirements into other policy sectors. However, the Cardiff process and the endorsement of the principle of sustainable development as a macro-level action guiding norm have recently lent a new urgency to the greening of the EU decision-making machinery. The Commission's efforts to achieve environmental policy integration (EPI) and sustainable development have been well researched. Less attention has been paid to the Council of Ministers and the European Council. The function of the rotating EU Presidency has remained a particularly under-researched area. This paper aims to explain what role, if any, the EU Presidency can play in ensuring that EPI and sustainable development are taken seriously by the Council of Ministers and the European Council. It focuses mainly on the most recent British and German as well as the Austrian and Swedish EU Presidencies, while putting forward unpublished empirical findings. The paper argues that there have been significant differences in the way in which different member governments have approached the task of ensuring the implementation of the EPI and sustainable development principles during their respective EU Presidencies. The differences can best be explained with reference to: 1) different core beliefs held by the main policy makers (i.e. government attitudes) towards EPI and sustainable development; 2) national environmental regulatory styles; and, 3) national structures including the coordination mechanisms of EU policies set in place by different member governments. However, policy learning (on the national as well as the EU level) and/or the desire to set the EU's agenda in order to ensure a good fit between national and supranational approaches can also play an important role in explaining member governments' actions.