

Martin Jänicke:

Greening of Government and the “Environmental State”

The concept of *environmental state* is a possible formula for the integration of environmental considerations into different policy sectors. It can be conceived in the context of three Meta functions of modern government, each comprising more than one field of policy: (1) the traditional economic function to secure and improve the conditions of production, (2) the welfare state function to redistribute the produced national income according to ideas of social security or justice, and (3) the relatively new function to protect the environment against negative effects of production and consumption. The meta function of the *environmental state* comprises nearly all policies from energy to agriculture - the corresponding ministries as a rule having a special environmental division. Several challenges however tend to restrict the adequate implementation of this ambitious concept of governance. The structural weakness of government regarding powerful target groups (“government failure”), the complexity of the “persistent” environmental problems, the economic and political globalisation so far have been the most important. To a certain degree these challenges have also been motors of policy innovations within the last 15 years. The “Rio process” and its model of multi-level, multi-sectoral environmental governance may be the most visible result. Political and economic globalisation at the same time offer new opportunities at least for a technology-based policy of ecological modernisation. The new environmental governance, however, has created a new challenge of complexities which necessitate more co-ordination, capacity and the definition of final responsibilities. Reinventing government and the nation state may be the most important contribution.