

Environmental portfolio essay samples

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Introduction

Environmental laws entail different treaties and laws which aim at protecting the environment. The laws include complex interlocking bodies which operate in an attempt to regulate how the human interrelate with the environment. The laws aim at reducing natural and human effects on the environment.

The laws on environment are, however, seen to create controversies when they tend to limit certain businesses, or regulate companies on what they are used to do. The limitations and stoppage limit or stops production of what was initially produced hence limiting consumption. Environmental laws become painful to deal with leading to a backlash of companies as they attempt to cope with such laws. Sometimes, such laws become outdated, as sometimes products do not meet exactly the given standards. Sometimes, the laws also paint a broad spectrum of aspects involved.

Article 1: State Oppose Federal Push Gut Their Environmental Laws

This is a news article published on Monday, August 2013. The article was retrieved from <http://www.allgov.com/news/controversies/9-states-oppose-federal-push-to-gut-their-environmental-laws-130805?news=850777>. The news article was published in 2013, was developed by cutting edge intelligence and created by David Wallechinsky. The author is qualified to publish the article because the article mainly deals with current affairs which appear on a newspaper. The author also qualifies because such news article requires a bit of analysis on issues and most of the time, publication of what is generally known, without insight to the news. In this case, the author

attempts to take various situations and assert that safety to the environment is not provided. However, the author is not very well conversant on general policies in regards to environment, as the author just touches on various issues without giving a deep insight on such issues, hence missing crucial analysis which might be helpful in understanding the different environmental laws

The news article addresses the issue that the safety is not guaranteed by environmental policies; because of certain loopholes or laws failing to protect the citizens and the environment. The author supports data, basically using events which have been happening to support his facts, that the different attorneys of Delaware, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Oregon, California, New Mexico, Washington and Vermont, oppose the bill as they realize that it is necessary to update an old law. The author also uses a historical point of view in comparisons of legislation in reaching certain findings and conclusions.

According to the article, different state attorneys oppose The Chemical safety improvement Act as they thought it had a huge possibility of not covering different areas. They termed the legislation as ‘unduly broad’, hence jeopardizing public safety and not preempt state laws. The news article shows how nine states opposed the push for nine environmental laws. The different states recognized the need for government to re-write the different laws which were insufficient and inadequate like the Toxic Substance Control Act, which has been in place for 40 years. Under the Act, a few dozens of chemicals are restricted and only roughly 200 chemicals are registered, as being tested and used in the united states: however, there are

over 85, 000 chemicals being used in United States. Other opposers to the bill opposed it because of the permeable effects the bill would have to the society, as it would be a barrier to the passage of tougher laws which might be helpful to in governing chemicals permeating the society. Such issues are seen to be barriers in an earlier passage of bills, or even preventing the bills from being passed at all.

Many industries have been opposing different federal laws which govern their products. However, they have recently changed their tunes and have attempted to oversee their behavior. Conservative state arguments have made arguments leading to triumph in the federal authority, thus inspiring states to change their sales nationally. This proposed bill was objected as it could not protect children and pregnant women. Also, there was the lack of clear timelines of EPA guidelines which provide that such chemicals should be tested for safety before they are manufactured.

Different lawyers asserted that courts should use different EPA guidelines to determine chemical safety, while at the same time maintain obstructive standards in judicial review. Notably, most of the stakeholders do not see anything that is so remote that the legislation cannot cover. The bill is seen to put in place restrictions which might ban different states from implementing their own legislation which might be vital in protecting processing, distribution and manufacture of chemicals; classified as either high or low priority by the EPA.

Similarly, the bill raises questions in regards to whether states can continue to pass laws which require disclosure of information by companies about products which have warning labels. Different stakeholders are seen tot

express reservations on the bill. Also, the stakeholder did not want federal laws to be passed at the expense of rights of other states. Different environmental groups opposed the law; majorly because they could not protect pregnant women.

The article presents general evidence and knowledge which show that there is a problem in regards to environmental policy. However, the arguments presented in this article are not strong because they are not very insightful. The arguments presented are based on articles passed by the federal government and are not insightful. Such policies include U. S Environmental Protection Agency, Chemical Safety Improvement Act, Safe Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 and American Chemical Council. The author also raises different questions in regards to these legislation, and whether companies require to disclose information. Similarly, the article raises questions as to whether the legislation protect the environment and citizens, and does not exactly answer such questions. The article does not specify on exactly how the Chemical Safety Improvement Act prevents other states from enacting their own legislation, thus restricting them.

The article uses the Acts for reference on specific issues such as the number of registered chemicals. The article also refers to different senators, like the senator of Louisiana Barbra Boxer (who is also a chairwoman for Senate Environment and Public Works Committee), and her opinion, and why she opposes the bill. Barbra asserts that the bill will lead to restrictions preventing other states from passing tougher laws. Similarly, the article refers to different government agencies such as environmental groups and attorneys of different states.

The article proposes that the action should be taken to ensure that legislation is passed on behalf of American people, and historical events should be considered in the process. This plan is feasible because the historic events are a perfect way to guide what should be done in the future, hence an excellent idea in attempting to resolve the inadequate policies seen historically. The article left out critical analysis of the legislation in question; the author asserts that it has negative effects on the environment and the human fraternity, but does not go into detail in attempting to explain exactly how these legislation directly impact environment or people. The tone of the author is accusatory making the readers take the author seriously and making them want to find out more about the accusations. The author uses broad generalization in various issues hence leaving the reader ask many questions in regards to the different issues discussed. The author is biased because he shows only the inadequacies of the environmental protection bills, but does not point out any positive influences the laws have in terms of the environment. An excellent example is the Chemical Safety Improvement Act, at least limits the production of chemicals despite the fact that it does not cover all chemicals. Accordingly, the author writes the article for general publicize and to trigger a cause of action in regards to the existing legislation, and their short- comings

Article 2: Journal of contemporary European research, vol 8. No. 2 of 2012

The journal article is written by Claire Dupoint, and Sebastian Oberthur. The article is titled Insufficient policy integration in EU energy policy; the importance of long term perspective. The article is retrieved from <http://www.jcer.net/index.php/jcer/article/view/474/338> and was published

online in 2012, by UACES and UACES student Forum. I think the authors were fully qualified to publish the article. The authors in this article show extensive knowledge in regards to climate policies, different integrations, and policy issues, especially EU's policy on gas import.

This article challenges the policies which are in place and attempt to solve different climate issues. The article challenges the level of Climate policy integrations (CPI) which are put in place. According to the article, there are assumptions that great level of CPI, has been achieved while in reality, little has been achieved in this sector. The article attempts to conceptualize the political frameworks especially in EU's gas policies and renewable energy policies. The article claims that a renewable climate policies are quite sufficient; however, such policies do not attain long-term climate objectives as required.

The article asserts that CPI has been absent in EU's pipeline policy of gas import. This has not had long term perspectives, and it has been hidden. Different frameworks demonstrate how there have been different insufficient levels of CPI. The articles explore on different cases to show the varying levels of CPI, so as to argue the long term considerations of policy considerations and long- term effects of CPI. The key words in the article include gas import pipeline policy, environmental policy integration and EU renewable gas policy.

According to the article, there has been growing discussions on climate CPI at the European levels and international levels on environmental policy integrations (EPI). Similarly, discussions have been based on expansive body, as a policy outcome and overreaching the principle, despite limited research

on CPI. Since Brundtland commission, there has been a vast literature in terms of examining and understanding different perspectives of overreaching policy issues. There has been an evolution of explanatory frameworks, bureaucratic theories and politics. The 2009 climate package shows EU's energy sector, and CPI levels.

Further, the article assesses CPI levels and how EU energy policy is applicable. It is seen that benchmark CPI establishes strong interpretations for output of the policies, and in the process of making such policies. The paper attempts to explain the CPI level output and outcomes using three key factors; firstly, level of political commitment to policies and CPI, secondly, the nature of functional overlaps of climate objectives in CPI and thirdly, the oily and institutional policy content. Additionally, the policy extent of CPI, can be a contribution to of the output of CPI policy, as another factor. The general CPI policy is seen to be widely applied in EU energy policies, which include gas import pipelines and renewable gas. The paper recognizes the need a conceptual framework which leads to a long- term perspective in regards to assessment of climate policy. Also, consideration of enhanced levels of CPI in the process of policy making and during the determination of policy objectives is necessary.

Research Methodologies

The article uses different literatures in conceptualizing CPI policies and how they are integrated and how they overlap. The article uses different arguments drawn from policies in the public and private sectors in an attempt to evaluate policy objectives and different standards of policy evaluations. The authors prioritize on the objectives of policies as a standard

for general evaluation in their study. Thus, enabling the authors make different criticisms in terms CPI. The article covers different policy objectives and the different outputs they generate. This coverage enables the author to identify both high and low coverage areas of different policies. The findings indicate that the effectiveness of such policies can be achieved if the policies are in line with scientific climate policy objectives. The article also uses investigates the gap between CPI closed policy decisions and the status quo of business as usual. During the research process, the article attempts to recognize the overlap between policy of climate and decisions and the presence and use of the procedures. Also, the research method included finding out presence and participation of different institutions in the policy making process.

Conclusions

The article links European integration with EU's energy policy in an attempt to link CPI literature with energy policy through a framework which is quite developed. The investigation was based on the assumption that CPI levels have been high since initiation in 2009. The findings showed inadequate CPI levels since 2009, when the research measured legislative measures in terms of energy package and integrated legislative measures. When both policies were applied, import pipeline policies and RE policy, there were insufficient CPI levels. This was in spite the fact that EU policy contains environmental stability as one of its major objectives. Notably, the research was based on climate objectives of long term and vision 2050; which is widely becoming popular and increasingly recognized as the move towards the right perspective of climate policy

In terms of concepts, the article attempts to bring different lines of the EPI literature and to situate them in different theories of European Integration. The benchmark measurement was whether there was an application of a strong CPI. Afterwards, this was measured using the core factors derived from literature of European theories of integration, as stated above. Which include; functional and nature overlap of climate objectives, political commitment level and policy in different institutional contexts. The analysis of the case in this situation provides a hypothesis of different interlink ages in different crucial factors and theories. In the case analysis, all the three explanatory factors are seen to reinforce each other, when RE is put into consideration. Generally, it is seen that there is an overlap of climate policy in and political commitment in the promotion of CPI. Also, in the context of policy in, institutions, there was high CPI levels which worked in favor of CPI. However, all this factors did not favor gas pipeline policy or rather were less favorable to the policy. Notably, there is nearly complete lack of consideration or discussion in case of climate policy objectives, in the process of making policies in the pipeline case. Therefore, this proves futile as there is no political commitment to CPI and in trying to address functional overlap, similarly, there is less hope for a commitment in terms of involvement of climate stakeholders and advocates in ensuring synergy of different policies. Findings also showed that lack of these synergies was linked to the lack of long-term focus in policy discussions. CPI prospects in the finding, show that policy objectives is related to nature of functional overlap, leading to impediment of integration

Recommendations

The article recommends conceptualization of climate change policy integration; it is important to draw lines on the literature of coordination, integration and coherence. Coherence in policies is usually vital because it ensures that different policies are harmonious, and no particular objectives or policies have a priority. Coherence also requires a lot of communication during the process of policy making.

The article shows usefulness of the framework and further empirical studies when encompassing different policies in the climate policy sector. Therefore, it is necessary to refine different frameworks in order to validate them. An excellent example is the need to refine more factors which relate to favoring CPI in policing of energy and beyond. New insights can be achieved by looking at different theories like EU reality in policy making and interactions of more theories, through examination of different cases. Therefore, the insights in this article open and advances a promising research agenda.

The article does not leave out any important issues; it discusses the different issues in an analytical manner, hence answering most questions it aims to address. The tone of the author is formal, trying to address stakeholders in the need for participation in putting in place coherent climate laws. The author does not use broad generalizations in the article, the author tries to identify specific issues and provide specific solutions to the problems, which are not vague. The author is motivated by the need to address different stakeholders and show them the need to revise policies to make them coherent and integrated in the policy making process, and also make them relevant in addressing environmental issues. The author is seen to come to a

realization where he finds out that most environmental laws do not protect the environment per say. The author is not biased because; the articles look to both sides of the policies, and to what extent the policy has achieved its aims. The article is just the tip of the iceberg on how different environmental policies fail to address the scientific and real problems in the environment today. It is an excellent example of inadequacy of policies and uses different evidences to show the existence of gaps in environmental policies. The author in this article is motivated by the need to raise a cause of action in regards to relevance of policies and the need for such policies to be coherent.

Article 3; Measuring European environmental performance

Measuring environmental policy performance is an article by Jochen Jesinghaus. The article is an issue of the journal Ecological Indicator, volume 17, June 2012, page 29 -37. The author of this article can be said to be qualified, because of good paragraph coherence in relation to themes, critical analysis of the topic in issue and proper analysis of different issues to make the reader, understand the topic better.

The article attempts to question the need to measure environmental performance. The author justifies the need to measure environmental performance, with performance of government. The author uses different environmental indicators to measure performance and aggregate environmental indicators. The article shows different practical examples on how environmental performance can be measured. According to the article, demonstrating feasibility issues of performance is quite hard because of the involvement of prominent political voice in the decisions.

Further, the article explores different obstacles and how to overcome them along the way. Many indices have been used in an attempt to measure environmental performance and only a few have been helpful. Firstly, experts start with the question on how environmental phenomena can be scientifically described and measured in the correct way. According to the author, it is necessary for such environmental phenomena in order to evoke politicians to spend more money on the environment rather than bailing out banks. In other words, ensuring that the measure of environmental performance has a great impact in an attempt to improve different environmental policies. According to the article, Columbia introduced environmental sustainability index (ESI), used in measuring the effectiveness of environmental policies. The author then picks a few important things to the learner, creating an objective quality index which is vital in measuring environmental policy effectiveness.

Conclusions and Recommendations

There is a great challenge in giving environmental issues a voice which can be strong enough to assert a challenge. A few promising candidates are there, however; it is necessary to overcome several magnitudes especially in the media. This will ensure that factors which measure effectiveness of environmental indicators, in showing policy effectiveness, just like the GDP. Also, environmental index should be tailored to the audience like NGO's. EPI should be kept transparent to ensure that a wide range of audience can understand.

Additionally, there should also be sub- indices which relate to the governance, social, economic and environmental which need to be explored.

The challenge seen in this indicator, therefore, is the elimination of doubt of co2 emissions. The author concludes by stating that there are enough environmental indicators. It is important base different arguments on communication, political science and cultural and communication science. Hence, success can be measured through a balanced use of environmental science and used as a tool of success and others

Environmental laws are seen to create a litigation controversy. This has led to an increase in environmental disputes brought to the federal courts, leading to an added controversy on the role of courts in the protection of the environment. This article presents opposing issues on the importance of litigation in protection of the environment.

According to different views, citizens need to go to court to defend their rights to a clean environment because they have no other options. However, generally, different government agencies are put in place to protect the interests of citizens; by regulating private interests through enforcement of laws. According to him citizens should defend themselves because politics is bureaucratic in nature, leaving the citizens having no representation. The regulators tend to regulate destinies of resources, water, land resources and air, leaving citizens out.

Commentary

The three articles show insight to the effectiveness and shortcomings of environmental policies. The article reveals that environmental policies are somewhat ineffective. However, they achieve environmental protection to some extent. The first article is biased based on the fact that it asserts that the policies in place are insufficient, but the second and third articles are not

biased as they attempt to address both sides of the policy issues. Both last articles had depth analysis of policy issues, unlike the first article. All the articles addressed the issue of inadequacy of environmental policies; the first article addresses on particularly Chemical Safety Improvement Act. The second article addresses the issue of insufficient policy integration specifically in the EU policy, showing the wider problem of inadequacy. The third problem shows the importance of measuring such policies, and how citizens should be well informed in regards to effectiveness of such policies. Certainly, environmental policies are very slow, and before enactment of policies, destruction will have already taken place. This is seen in the news article where certain policies are rejected. Also, different policies are inadequate; strikingly some environmental policies do not protect the environment per-se leading to further environmental degradation. Certainly many policies have loopholes and do not adequately cover environmental issues. Similarly, other policies fail to overlap, creating a greater issue on the need for environmental protection. Also, there has been seen to be a wider problem in terms of outdated laws, which do not address current environmental issues.

Different environmental policies are seen to be ineffective, apart from this; there are conflicts of different stakeholders. This leads to a lot of litigation issues in the courts due to conflict of interest between certain laws and interests of citizens and business men and women. This is seen because such policies are always enacted without consideration of different interest groups. The laws protecting the environment tend to limit or stop different activities limiting or even stopping businesses. Consequently, the courts

remain as a forum where citizens can have equal representation and take-part in the decision making process in regards to environmental issues.

Citizens, therefore, find themselves in a position where they have to bring litigation against agencies that should be protecting their rights. However, major obstacles are seen in lawsuits initiated by citizens. Also, main government agencies have sovereign immunity, hence cannot be taken to the courts. Similarly, citizens experiencing direct damage cannot claim their legal rights.

Accordingly, recent legislation provide that land, air and water are held in trust of citizens; hence citizens have a right to litigation when private, or government interest is interfere with such interests. Modern law embodies this idea, giving rights to individuals, thus enabling them to go to court to protect environmental protection rights.

Conclusion

Works cite

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