

## Ppt 1: Coverage

### Working group 1

#### Border-crossing infrastructure-planning

#### Special item: Bi-national co-operation (experience-report)

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## Ppt 2: Map of the region, in the center IA of EIA

Mr. Stahl already mentioned the **regional road-connection** in the area between Frankfurt (Oder) and Eisenhüttenstadt. It is the **first road-building project ever** with a cross-border EIA at the german-polish border.

Today work on the **EIA for that project is finished.**

I would be able to have presentations about some different items, for example:

- ◆ The **special methods** of the cross-border EIA
- ◆ Special Problems **concerning the EU habitats directive** and the way we managed the problems
- ◆ The **different planning procedures in Germany and Poland** and their impact on the project (at least one day)
- ◆ **Report about the results of the EIA**

**But... I will not do so.**

I would rather take a **closer look on a small and very special**, nevertheless **important item:**

**The binational co-operation (soft-skills of a bi-national project)**

I would like to **present our experiences** and also would **give a few recommendations** to help **bringing similar projects to success.**

For that I will take a **short look into the history** of that project:

**Politicians** formulated the goal "**Europe should grow together**"

In the early 90s the **federal government instructed the road-building administration** to plan and build regional road-connections between Germany and Poland.

In the middle of the 90s the **first feasibility studies** were conducted. They included the **german territory only**.

But the **EU-entrance of Poland** was far away and **money was short** (mainly due to the costs of german reunion). There were simply **more important projects** than a regional road to Poland.

But then the **EU-entrance of Poland came closer...** and in **2001 a first agreement** between Brandenburg and Wojewodschaft Lubuskie to build a regional road-connection **was signed**.

In **2002 a first proposal for an investigation area** ranging on german and polish territory was made.

In spring **2003 german parliament** fixed the project by putting it on the list of **"projects of urgent priority"**. With that step a **project in germany becomes law**.

In august 2003 a conference (so-called **"Antragskonferenz"**) marked the **start of the regional planning procedure** (ROV = Raumordnungsverfahren) The conference included german and polish authoritys.

### **Ppt 3: Images of the Antragskonferenz (Kleist-Forum FFO)**

In the **record of that conference** was laid down the **framework of the planning process** for the project:

- ◆ the **investigation area for the EIA**

### **Ppt 4: Investigation-area of the EIA (as laid down during the Antragskonferenz)**

It was also laid down...

- ◆ ...to use the **same evaluation methods** in Germany and Poland
- ◆ ...to create **bilingual documents**
- ◆ ...to represent **all results in maps** for german and polish territory

and, very important:

- ◆ .... the **installation of a high-ranking bi-national working group + expert-working-groups** (technics and environment)

For us it was the **long awaited kick-off** for **two years of hard and interesting work** and an exiting time.

### **What made our work so interesting ?**

Well, **I could mention** the professional, technical and methodical aspects, **but essential** was something else:

**Suddenly we had to deal with** authoritys, office holders and persons from an until then nearly unknown country.

... they were speaking a **language** we did not understand

... they used **other technical parameters**

... they **worked with different methods**....

... there was a **unknown organization of administration**

... they used a **different grid reference for their maps**.... etc. etc.

**And here I start with a report of my personal experiences** and the experiences of my employees. We made an **internal evaluation** after finishing our work on this project and here are **some of the results**:

## **Ppt 5: 5 main topics**

### **1. Language barrier**

The **greatest challenge** at the beginning of our work (and even until now) **was the language-barrier**.

Although we had a good co-operation in the working group and most of the participants were able to speak **two languages** (german-english, german-polish, polish-english, polish-german) a lot of **misunderstandings** occurred that led to **confusion and open questiones**.

**The reason for that** was, that the **german technical terms concerning environmental planning** could **not be easily translated** one to one into the polish language.

Even the **experienced translators had problems** to find the right **terms and meanings**. Therefore a **common definition had to be found** wich after that came to translation.

**Let me give you an example:**

We were about to discuss the **evaluation criteria for sealing-effects on groundwater** in the frame of the **environmental-experts-working group**.

We made a proposal, wich included the term **"groundwater-recharge-rate".= Grundwasserneubildungsrate...**

To our surprise **the polish experts did not understand what we were talking about...** ...and we thought "...how can they be so stupid..."

After a discussion of more than 20 minutes, Mrs. Osterath, our project leader **went to the flip-chart and painted clouds, plants, soil, raindrops, arrows that stood for evaporation...** and suddenly one of the polish experts said: Oh, you mean **"effective infiltration", why didn't you mention that ??**

We had **similar discussions** on a lot of other technical terms....

The **same procedure** had be taken **concerning the methods of valuation of the components of the environment** (soil, water, landscape, animals, plants, climate/air, people and cultural heritage). These are the components of the environment we have to look at in an EIA, following EU-directive.

And we had to do that also on the **methods for the assessment of the impacts of the projekt** on these environmental components.

**Finally every single technical term and method was discussed, synchronized and translated.** One can say: We invented a especially desinged language-pattern for this project.

## 2. Different methods

**The methods of putting together an EAI** and dealing with the demands of **many guidelines** in Germany have developed over many years. **The use** of these methods **is in a way "common sense"**.

But the **transfer of these methods in the frame of a border-crossing project** was not that obvious at all....

**Let me give you another little example:**

**For mapping animals on polish territory** we integrated a **polish team of biologists** of Zielona-Gora university. They all are **well-known experts** for special groups of animals.

At first the german and polish **biologists had no problems understanding each other** for they used the **latin terms** for plants and animals. Even the **time and areas of mapping** were agreed very soon.

**Our surprise was great, when we got the results of the first mapping-campaign.** The animals occurred not where they should occur... They ranged far **outside their normal habitats... Some groups of animals had not been found at all....**

How could that be ??

Well, in Germany some groups of animals (for example grasshoppers) **are determined by hearing the special sounds** they make.

**It is sometimes the only way to find out differences between species.** In Poland the common way to do such mappings is to **catch the animals and conserve them in alcohol for later determination.** This method is **highly precise** but takes a lot of **time**, a lot of **money** and is not useful for larger areas. We had to deal with an area of 120 km<sup>2</sup> of investigation area in Poland alone.

## 3. Different values

**Our company has many years of experience concerning EIAs.** Therefore **we are used to** value the components of the environment **without scrutinizing the criteria.**

**Suddenly someone doubted the criteria.** These doubts were the result of a **different view on the components of environment.** In Germany the **criteria are based on the potential of nature** (without human intervention). In Poland the **criteria are based on the value for human use.**

**Here is an example for that:**

In Germany one **criterion for the valuation of soil** is the "**natural output-function**" (potential capacity of the soil as subsistence for plants res. biotops).

In Poland the "**actual output-function**" is the criterion for the valuation (soil as subsistence for agricultural use).

**We could not reach an agreement** on this special point. Therefore we used **different criteria in each country.**

#### **4. Confidence**

**It is quite natural that there is a kind of distance** between the persons involved **at the beginning** of a bi-national teamwork.

**It took time for the team-members to feel as respected partners.**

It was **very important** to show the polish partners that we were **truely interested in hearing their oppinion.**

We **involved the polish adminstration** by handing out all results of the EAI on polish territory.

They approved or corrected (if necessary) and had therefore **a direct influence on the final results** of the EIA.

That brought a great advantage: There were **no objections** against the final results of the EIA **during the official presentation** because the content was well-known.

**But confidence is also made through small but important things**.or gestures:

I remember very well the **surprise and friendly reaction** when Mrs. Osterath (our project-leader) **made her first address to the working-group in polish-language** after having a very hard evening-course with a personal trainer.

## 5. Legislation

In **Germany it took about 20 years and literally hundreds of judgements** until environmental matters became **part of the planing-process** like nowadays.

European law, especially the **directives concerning environment**, became part of the polish law **a short time ago**.

Judgements that could provide **clear guidelines for practical use** are missing so far.

**Therefore laws sometimes alter rapidly in reaction to practical experiences. A dynamic development** has to be accepted when working on new projects.

A very good example for that development is the **handling of the habitats directive**... But that's another story.

## Folie 6: Recommendations

From our point of view of high importance is the

◆ **Installation of a high-ranking working-group of experts and authorities**

(methods and communication)

- Inevitable for the tuning of methods
- face to face communication

◆ **High-ranked !!! Co-ordinating Person in each country**

(organisation and mediation)

Someone has to be responsible ! and has to be contact-person and mediator for working-groups - authorities / project - politics

◆ **Regular meetings of the working-group**

(information and decision-making)

Meeting of the working-group every three months  
expert-groups moreoften, depending on the work that has to be done. Especially in  
the beginning (tuning of methods) and in the end (fixing of final results).

◆ **Continuity of the persons involved**

(confidence and knowledge)

Confidence depends on persons !

despite electronic media... knowledge about the "internal affairs" of the project lies in  
the mind of the people working on that project.

◆ **Bilateral time-management**

(coordination and flexibility)

Nothing really works as expected.... Don't set the milestones on the timetable too  
tight !! Some things take their time to develop.... German correctness is not welcome  
everywhere.....

◆ **Knowledge of the other language**

(confidence and respect)

You don't have to discuss all technical terms in the other language... But it helps a lot  
to be able to talk a few private words with the people involved... ...personal contact  
makes confidence... even good translators are sometimes not able to transport the real  
meaning of a technical term... ...better find a bi-lingual expert....

**All these proposals you should keep in mind when starting a cross-border-  
project....**

**Otherwise** something like that could happen....

**Ppt 7: Something went wrong ??**

**I have to admit**, that there is **no project-evaluation representing both sides** so  
far. We hope to be able to **question our polish colleagues about their experiences  
and feelings** some day.

**It would be very interesting to compare the results and create a guideline for  
future projects.**

**Thank you very much !**