

Wirtschaftsvereinigung Stahl, Germany,

on

Consultation „Inception impact assessment - Revision of the Industrial Emissions Directive”

The iron and steel industry in Germany supports the efforts of the Commission to achieve a higher level of air quality and reduce negative impacts on, and risks to human health and the environment. With this intention the iron and steel industry in Germany promotes the Industrial Emission Directive (IED) which provides ambitious and notably explicit rules on permitting, operating and decommissioning of industrial plants. With its integrated approach the IED is taking environmental objectives, local conditions and economic aspects into account in a balanced manner.

It is conspicuous that the commission is strongly going ahead to start the revision of the IED at this particular time when the evaluation of the IED under the REFIT programme is not finished yet and the COVID-19 pandemic is binding not only all activities of industrial operators but of the whole European economy. The missing knowledge of the concluding report of the evaluation of the IED and the absence of a related staff working document of the commission is hindering a significant and robust analysis of the intention of the commission to revise the IED. But this seems nearly negligible considering the huge challenges the COVID-19 pandemic is providing for all of us. The revision of the IED is not as essential as to start it right now.

Nevertheless, we are able to give a general assessment on the aspects in the policy options and the preliminary assessment of expected impacts.

- The positive outcome of the IED evaluation so far drafted is showing that the directive is well working to its aim reducing negative environmental impacts. An assessment of the baseline scenario should be done carefully having in mind that many best available techniques reference documents (BREF) are neither reviewed nor implemented yet.
- We also underline that the overall structure of the IED is functioning well. Steel industry is very well mapped by the activities determined by annex I of the IED. If any improvement is possible, it should lead to an advanced handling of the BREF process the activities are related to.
- The IED allows sustainable development and improvements for industry by the evaluation of BREFs regularly updated and revised by the BREF process. But the BREF process needs improvement. By being more focussed, it needs a stronger use of transparent methodologies and more consistency between BREFs.
- We strongly believe that for the achievement of the objectives of the IED an Europe-wide harmonised

a) implementation of the provisions of the IED and

b) the application of the best available techniques is necessary.

This is the best tool ensuring continuous improvement of environmental performance and to create a level playing field within European industry.

- The access to information, the participation in decision-making and access to justice has been well improved by the IED and should not conflict with compliance to confident business information and competition rules.
- With its process related focus, the IED is not and could not be the key driver of circular economy. But by considering material efficiency and waste management with an integrated view, it accompanies circular economy in a supportive manner.
- The evaluation of best available techniques with its integrated approach provides an assessment even of techniques supporting the decarbonisation of industry.
- The strong coherence of the IED with other environmental policy areas and EU legislation should be maintained.

We are fully convinced that the IED has worked very well and will do this in future in its current version. With its excellent and very strong tool of evaluating binding best available techniques in an integrated manner the IED is able to reflect even new and advanced environmental challenges.

A stronger focus of the provisions of the IED itself on single additional environmental objectives driven by politics would destroy the integrated approach of the IED and will simultaneously strongly jeopardise the base for permitting industrial installations in Europe.

A revision of the IED is not in any way necessary and would be more harmful than helpful.

The iron and steel industry in Germany is paying high attention to further developments in the implementation of the IED and in the improvement of the BREF process.