

Abstract: Legal Regulation of Environmental Impact Assessment

This thesis is concerned with the most important cross-cutting instrument for environmental protection that implements the prevention principle, which is environmental impact assessment ("EIA"). The subject of the thesis is its domestic legal framework, which is brought into connection with the institute of integrated environmental binding opinion, introduced with effect from 1 January 2024 by Act No. 148/2023 Sb., driven by the idea of integrating environmental administrative acts issued by the authorities concerned. It was from this date that the amendment of the domestic EIA legal regulation, which is concentrated in Act No. 100/2001 Sb., came into force as a result of three amending acts, namely Act No. 284/2021 Sb., Act No. 149/2023 Sb., and Act No. 465/2023 Sb. Taking into account that the reason for its adoption was mainly the new Building Act No. 283/2021 Sb., which aimed at "*integration, simplification, acceleration and streamlining*" of the permitting of projects, the thesis pays increased attention to the so-called consequential proceedings.

Part 1 of the thesis focuses on the characteristics of EIA, followed by the identification of environmental principles it reflects, and explanation of its international, EU and national formal sources of law. Building on its insights, Part 2 of the thesis focuses on EIA under national law, both in its basic aspects and its various stages. Increased attention is also paid to its amendments in connection with the adoption of Act No. 148/2023 Sb. and Act No. 283/2021 Sb. As a result, Part 3 of the thesis is concerned with the integration mechanism of integrated environmental binding opinion, which is discussed not only in its separate form, but also in conjunction with the afore mentioned legal framework of EIA and the so-called consequential proceedings.

The main aim of the thesis is to answer the question whether the amended legal framework of EIA in connection with the legal regulation of integrated environmental binding opinion and the so-called consequential proceedings contributes to more effective permitting of projects, as the explanatory memorandums of the laws in question suggest, both in terms of high-level environmental protection and in terms of their cost-effectiveness.

Keywords: Environmental Impact Assessment – Development consent – Integrated Environmental Binding Opinion