Title: Future Needs for E-Government Tools in Environmental Permitting

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Abstract:
Public officials, environmental experts and citizens and enterprises need access to relevant legislation and case law, existing permits and previously compiled environmental impact assessments. Examination of existing e-government tools for environmental permits has shown a definite need for a system that integrates relevant processes and services already provided by public authorities and agencies. The system would then enable them to model and deploy services as a cloud of e-government services that support environmental permitting procedures to citizens and businesses. E-Government is at a historical turning point and governments worldwide. To date, the use of e-government tools for environmental protection in particular is lagging behind the field, despite its much vaunted promise to reduce the environmental impact of economic activities. Examining current egovernment tools for environmental permits, there is a clear need for a better use of ICT tools for the simplification of environmental permitting procedures to overcome bureaucratic burdens, perform the required tasks within the limited available resources (human and infrastructures), and ensure transparency in the permitting process. Further, e-government can support democratization (e-Democracy) by enabling citizens to participate in political consultations in real-time and in a cost-effective manner. Finally, egovernment is considered a means to reach national environmental targets, as it eases the process towards a paper free office. Nevertheless, more studies are needed to evaluate the environmental impact that the implementation of e-government may have on other areas, such as increased electricity consumption of ICT infrastructure or the disposal of obsolete equipment, also known as ewaste.

Key Words: E-government, environmental permits, Future

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