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**INVESTMENT SECURITY REQUIRES CLEAR REGULATIONS –
APPROACHES FOR RESOLVING COMPETING USES
OF UNDERGROUND STORAGE FORMATIONS**

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Abstract

The use of underground geological formations for natural gas storage is currently enjoying a period of major expansion. In addition, considerable additional need is expected for storage of compressed air and hydrogen to balance out the fluctuating wind and solar power, the permanent storage of CO₂ and geothermal energy. First conflicts of use are now appearing, exemplified by competing uses of natural gas and compressed air. There are however valid, legal reference points to help in considering the collection, evaluation and solution of conflicting uses, at EU level in particular CCS Directive 2009/31/EC. The member state regulated spatial planning is best suited for the large-scale and precautionary compilation of the conflicts, as it allows specific formations to be defined as preference areas. Overall further adjustments are necessary to valid legislation on the characteristics of underground use conflicts in order to create legal and investment security.

Keywords: competing uses, underground storage, renewable energy

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