

THE FEATURES OF UKRAINE'S LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY: SOCIAL COMPONENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



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Abstract. The article investigates the role of the social component of sustainable development in the local environmental policy in the context of the decentralization reform implementation in Ukraine. The justified necessity for ecologic payments to the population who are living on environment polluted and an urbanized territory is substantiated. A generalized model for the environmental taxes and payments formation is presented, where a special place in the ecologic budget of the united territorial community is occupied by ecological payments to the population.

The state mechanisms development for the environmental investment funds creation and the environmental payments to the population regulation have long been in an incomplete stage. In current programs of social and economic development, environmental issues are of secondary importance after the industrial development plans and GDP growth implementation. However, the conditions for the quality of life of current and future generations are being formed nowadays. This demonstrates the need to adjust existing and develop new strategic plans for sustainable development of industrial regions in the context of the environmental issues solution.

Thus, it is expedient to create an appropriate unit for sustainable development of the territorial community in the local executive authorities' structure. Its competence has to include social development and social protection of the population issues within the framework of the current legislation of social protection and social services for the population and environmental protection. In its mandate, this unit has to determine the priorities for the conditions formation for sustainable social development of the corresponding community, using ecological, socio-demographic, ecological and economic indicators of the territory development.

Keywords: *local environmental policy, united territorial communities, sustainable development, ecological taxes and payments.*

Introduction

The growth of the world's population and the production scale, together with irrational consumption patterns, is becoming an increasingly heavy burden in the processes of region life-support potential restoring, as well as countries and the planet as a whole. It is expected that by 2020 the world population will exceed 8 billion people. However, currently 60 percent of this population lives in coastal areas, and there are 65 percent of cities with a population of more than 2.5 million people located on the coast of the seas and oceans; some of them are already at or below the current sea level. These interacting processes affect the use of atmospheres, land, water, energy and other resources. Therefore, it is necessary to develop strategies to reduce the negative impact of anthropogenic activities on the environment and the negative impact of climate change on the world's population [1].

This issue is of particular importance in Ukraine, where, in the context of the institutional support system reforming and the lack of adopted mechanisms for regulating this activity, the united territorial communities of fast-growing cities face serious environmental problems. Growth and expansion of the urbanized areas boundaries make it necessary to pay more attention to the peculiarities of the local government activity and the mechanisms for the economic activity management formation within the territorial communities, taking into account the sustainable development needs [2].

A key element of this complex relationships system is the human factor that has to be properly taken into account in the development and implementation of an integrated sustainable development policy. The policy requires a scientific study of the interrelationships between demographic trends and social factors, the rational use of resources and the spread of environmentally friendly and resource-saving technologies. Thus, the social sphere of activity at the local level is the spatial processes implementation in society, the rational forms of people's lives organization introduction in terms of working conditions, life, recreation, personal development, the restoration of life, reproduction of the population. This sphere is directly connected with politics, economics, ecology, sociology, demographic research, and the other sectors. Therefore, it is advisable to consider the social sphere development as a type of economic activity under sustainable development conditions exclusively in the context of organizing people's lives within the territorial organization of labor, namely as the social asset of a territorial community, that is, community resources, concentrated in the citizens and citizens associations' capabilities.

A review of recent papers. The emphasis on a problem of the social component formation of the sustainable development policy study is given by Ukrainian scientists as A. Kolodiy [9], E. Luksha [2], E. Gugnyn [3], Yu. Savko [4], A. Stepanenko [5], E. Khlobystov, A. Chechel [6] and others. An analysis of the scientific literature devoted to the effective local environmental policy formation showed that, despite a large body of knowledge accumulated on this subject, the issue of the social component of local sustainable

development policies determination, namely, approaches to outlining the role of an individual in solving environmental problems and difficulties with a certain territorial community development need additional research.

Research objective: to determine the role of the sustainable development social component in local environmental policy in the context of the decentralization reform implementation in Ukraine and the unified territorial communities' formation.

Statement of basic materials. Economic development based on the intensification of the use of the mineral and raw materials system affects adversely the environment and creates dangerous conditions for worsening prospects for social and economic development due to a shortage of resource potential, rising costs for environmental protection of the population and territories, the need to eliminate the consequences of man-induced impact and restore natural conditions of existence.

The current state of decentralization in Ukraine determines the urgent need to continuously improve the infrastructure for the provision of public institutions in order to increase the awareness of decision makers at all levels in this matter and to provide them with more accurate information that ought to form the basis of national and international policy, which has to simultaneously enable to analyze the information.

Ecological problems nowadays are coming to the fore in the state policy of each country; it is connected with the catastrophic deterioration of the environment and the depletion of natural resources. The program of each political party or group has to have an environmental component, at least on the basis of the Constitution and laws of Ukraine, which explicitly states that every citizen of Ukraine has the right to a safe and healthy environment, that is, the duty of the authorities to ensure and guarantee this right. Therefore, the following objectives ought to be achieved in the near future [3]:

- ensure that demographic trends and factors are taken into account in the global analysis of environmental and developmental issues;
- provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between population dynamics, technology development, behavioural features due to ethnic culture, the state of

natural resources and natural life support systems;

- assess the degree of threat to the population living in ecologically fragile areas and large settlements in order to determine the priorities for action at all levels, taking into account the needs determined by the territorial communities development.

Thus, effective local policy is the process of existing infrastructure rational use by civil society, which has to result in the social capital accumulation in the territorial community in conditions of its sustainable development. This direction should be implemented first of all within the framework of the legislation on social protection and social services for the population, where it is necessary to take into consideration not only the socioeconomic indicators but also ecological state of the territory, which ought to be provided by the relevant local authorities and local self-government [6].

A lot of countries have been working on the issue of ensuring population's life worth living in adverse environmental or natural conditions. Germany pays extra bonuses as for "harmfulness" to the miners of the Ruhr basin, whose environmental conditions largely coincide with the Ukrainian Donbas. All citizens residing in this territory who have a retirement, except pensions payments also receive an everyday monthly allowance. Americans from Alaska area have a higher income, additional social benefits (from \$ 700 a month and more), etc. Russia practices differentiated eco-payments, the size of which depends on the degree of danger to health of certain climatic and environmental conditions. It is well-known that in Russia residents of the North, the Far East and Eastern Siberia for a lot of years have been receiving significant additional payments. First of all, it is the ratio to wages and pensions, ranging from 1.5 to 2.0. It was an encouragement in the Soviet times for a lot of people to go there to earn "big money". Thus, environmental payments are a common world practice, in civilized countries it has been successfully practiced for more than one decade.

In Ukraine there are also real examples of such fair payments. For instance, 2.6 million "Chernobyl victims" who receive various benefits and allowances in medium sizes from 27 to 30 percent of the basic income; about 31.2 billion UAH is annually taken from the

treasury. Almost 408 million UAH is spent annually on the inhabitants of mountainous settlements (and there are about half a million of them in Ukraine). At the same time, the wage premium is 25 percent, and pensions, scholarships and social benefits comprise 20 percent. However, currently in ecologically unfavorable conditions of industrial regions of Ukraine more than 15 million people live and work and in order to restore their health and living conditions no budget is allocated.

Thus, the idea of compensation payments is laid down in the Constitution of Ukraine. The fact that the Basic Law is still not fully implemented in this part testifies to the attitude of the authorities and ignorance and passivity of Ukrainians in defending their rights in this sphere. Article 50 of the Constitution of Ukraine guarantees every citizen a safe life and health, the environment and compensation for harm caused by the violation of this right. In addition, since 1991, Ukraine has a Law "On Environmental Protection", which undertakes to guarantee the population "environmentally safe for life and health" conditions. Article 5 of this Law clearly states that protecting people's health and life from the negative impact of unfavorable environmental condition ought to be controlled by the state, and "the environmental rights of citizens are provided by compensation in the established order of harm caused to the health and property of citizens as a result of violation of environmental protection legislation" [4].

The first issue that one has to bear in mind when dealing with "compensation payments" is the formation of appropriate financing sources. The principle of environmental subsidies is as follows: a business entity that pollutes the environment pays for this and the EU system works like that. The atmosphere pollutes the enterprise; it also transfers to the local budget the corresponding funds, which are subsequently distributed among the residents who live in the adjacent territories [8].

The coefficients of environmental taxes and payments have to be determined through indicators of environmental responsibility of economic entities. The place taken by the company in rating by the amount of places in ranking lists with certain indicators and ought to become the rating of the environmental responsibility of the corporate agreement subject, which is also the amount of

environmental payments of the economic entity.

Equally important is the issue of the mechanism formation for the redistribution of "ecological" articles of local budgets, where the amount of payments to the population must correlate with the degree of environmental contamination of the territory of citizens' residence, the effectiveness of regional environmental programs and investment environmental projects for the resource-saving introduction and environmentally friendly technologies. Unfortunately, such a principle has not been introduced in Ukraine. If earlier all the money that was directed to the environmental pollution compensation by the enterprises accumulated in Kiev, then after the decentralization reform implementation in Ukraine, there was a proportion in which 70% of the funds remain in the local budgets of the

united territorial communities, and the remaining 30% is directed to nationwide programs. The Cabinet of Ministers and the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources have repeatedly insisted that there are not enough funds to finance state environmental programs, but nevertheless, having regard to this proportion, the money for ecological supplemental payments to the population is now in local budgets of territorial communities (Fig. 1).

The attempts to use the potential of Ukraine in the framework of international agreements on environmental protection can be considered as an alternative source. Currently, Ukrainian enterprises are emitting much less harmful gases; it means that there is a lot more quota than it is needed, in contrast to countries that can expand their emission rate at the expense of the Ukrainian reserve.

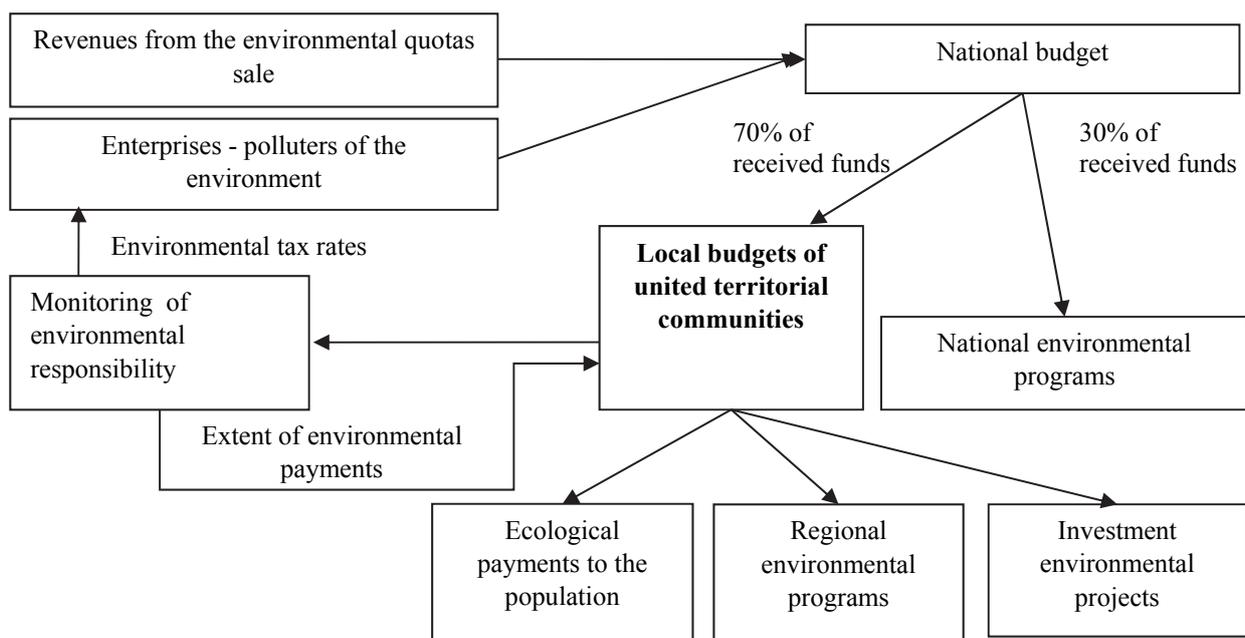


Fig. 1 Model of the environmental taxes and payments formation

There through, it is expedient to determine the primary objectives of environmental policy:

- recognition at the legislative level of the environmental pollution territories by zones of an emergency ecological situation;
- introduction of allowances for salaries, pensions, scholarships and other social payments for ecologically polluted areas residents;
- increase of local budgets taking into account ecological features of the

territories by applying a correction factor to them;

- increase the local budgets gaps by redistributing taxes transferred by industrial enterprises for the environment pollution and natural resources use;
- conducting effective economic reforms, modernizing the industry in compliance with environmental and social standards;
- introduction of strict state control over the activities of environmentally hazardous enterprises and the principle of irreversible

- and unconditional responsibility of business entities for environmental damage;
- implementation of integrated measures to ensure environmental safety of these regions;
- development of the economic stimulation system of nature protection activities and non-state environmental funds activities;
- development and implementation of the mechanism for international trade in greenhouse gas emissions by industrial enterprises, as well as implementation of environmental "joint implementation projects";
- the direction of revenues that Ukraine will receive in the framework of international agreements on environmental quotas, for the population and the environment improvement.

In complex targeted programs for regional development of territories, it is advisable to envisage the following directions, which, due to the environmental activities introduction, have a positive impact on the social (reducing social tension and creating conditions for proper rest) and economic (reducing the costs of maintaining the necessary level of public safety) spheres. These measures include:

- reclamation of disturbed lands and protection of lands from erosion, flooding,

- swamping, drainage, landslides, compaction, industrial and other waste pollution, improvement of agricultural land, increase of soil fertility;
- creation of new recreational zones;
- use of wildlife objects in cultural, educational, scientific and aesthetic purposes;
- carrying out works on transportation, processing and recycling of waste;
- improvement of phytosanitary, ecological and aesthetic state of settlements;
- construction and reconstruction of treatment facilities;
- construction of environmentally safe solid waste landfills;
- protection of rural settlements and agricultural lands from the harmful effects of water;
- integrated flood protection.

Thus, in the process of regional development programming amid the economic, environmental and social components of sustainable development, there is a close interaction, which manifests itself in the fact that the implementation of activities in one sphere positively affects the condition of another.

Conclusions

The development of state mechanisms for the environmental investment funds creation and the environmental payments regulation to the population has long been in an incomplete stage. In current programs of social and economic development, environmental issues are of secondary importance after the industrial development implementation plans and GDP growth, but the conditions for the current life quality and future generations are formed only at the present stage, which demonstrates the need to adjust existing and develop new strategic plans for sustainable development of industrial regions in the context of the environmental issues solution.

Thus, in the structure of local executive authorities and local self-government, it is expedient to create an appropriate unit for sustainable development of the territorial community, whose competence has to include issues of social development and social protection of the population within the framework of the current legislation on social protection and social services for the population and environmental protection. In its authority, this unit ought to determine the priorities for the sustainable social development conditions formation of the corresponding community, using ecological, socio-demographic and ecological and economic indicators of the territory development.

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