

THE INVOLVEMENT OF FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TOPIC

Mihai Cosmin Bucur¹, Denisa Liliana Maricescu (Pârvu)²Alina Niculina Grigore³
^{1,2,3} Valahia University of Târgoviște, Faculty of economics science
Str. Lt. Stancu Ion, nr. 35-130105, Targoviste, Dambovita, Romania
denisa_db@yahoo.com cosminbucur74@yahoo.com

Abstract

The objective process of globalization leads to the development and implementation of environmental politics, opens opportunities to promote the environmental objectives by a reorientation of the economical politics (especially of the fiscal ones) considered direct tools for environment quality protection and which are taken into consideration in a sustainable economical development achievement. Sustainable development means a better quality of life both for the present moment and for the future. The resources for the environment improvement, both at global level and in Romania have been and are still limited. On the other hand, the costs implied in some environment objectives achievement are very high, just as in any other sector of activity. The main restrictions in implementation are determined by the general shortage in financial resources and in the institutional capacity, rather than the specific problems related to the environment protection or the possible solutions.

Key words: sustainable development, natural resources, sustainable development strategy

1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development was defined by the Brundtland Commission in 1987 as “present needs meeting without compromising the future generations possibilities to meet their needs”. In addition to the Lisboa Agenda for economic growth and jobs, the strategy for Sustainable Development is often “forgotten” Sustainable development means a better quality of life both for the present moment and for the future. According to a sustainable development vision, the progress involves immediate and on long term objectives, local and global actions, economical and environmental issues, being all inseparable. Such a vision on society will not be imposed only by politics; the society in its whole has to adopt some certain principles (political, economical, social, of thinking).

EU has a Strategy of Sustainable Development which proposes clear objectives and actions, related to seven priorities, most of them in the field of environment:

- Climate changing and clean energy;
- Sustainable transport;
- Sustainable consumption and production;
- Natural resources management and preservation;
- Public health;
- Social inclusion, demography and migration;

- Poverty, sustainable development challenges at global level.

Sustainable development represents a goal of the actual worldwide economy which occurs amid globalization. Following the summits from Davos – Switzerland in January 2001 and Genoa – Italy in July 2001, on the worldwide economy issues (World Economic Forum), it results that globalization changes the context of environment issues at local, regional and global level, which imprints new dimensions to sustainable economy development.

The way an economy of a country is provided with new technologies from those considered “modern”/ sustainable reflects in absolute value, the sustainable development potential of the respective economy. The innovation processes for sustainability are found directly achieved, basically, in production, but essentially, “the scientific research” remains the fundamental reliance in generating the innovative results that assures the sustainable development, by introducing the technical progress for “clean” production.

The overall resources that assure the sustainable economic development are focused on elements of scientific research and technical progress. Usually, there is a trend to find technological solutions for all issues of the

environment. Such a persistency determines at least two sub trends (dimensions):

- a real pressure upon the eco-system, because of the deviation to derived consequences from immediate solutions (a weak continuity of the persistency to obtain a sustainable solution);
- the process of technological increase is shown, and therefore, the conclusion that the technologies determine the nature of the value system is accredited.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

Technological determinism for sustainability cannot be final and exclusivist, because, in the main plan, the institution (entities) increase is taking place, too. Furthermore, the infinite expansion of enterprises does not exist, but there is rather a process of balancing between micro and macrostructures.

As for the changings for a sustainable and eco-efficient development, some trends are noticed, such as:

- propagation of new, modern sustainable technologies implication (application);
- increase in the inovation rate;
- increase in automatization dimension;
- changings in inputs usage;
- shortening the life cycle of products and a higher flexibility of technologies.

Conceiving the sustainable development strategies has into view, basically, the following:

- availability and capacity to establish which is the most appropriate development type for the present and future infrastructure;
- capacity of efficient assimilation and distribution (difussion) of clean technologies;
- power and ability to improve, adapt and develop technologies;
- assuring a continuous and highly qualitative process of professional training (education and training);
- stipulating an appropriate legislative framework to facilitate the sustainable changing fluxes;
- existance of a political environment favourable to sustainable development strategies (stiulating economic growth);

- functioning of an appropriate and efficient information network with regard to sustainability. Sustainability or sustainable development is the central objective of the European Union politics; Romania has automatically adopted this objective. This does not mean that the European Union provides us an “automat pilot for susttainable development”. The Romanian Government, through administrating huge resources is the only national trustable centre of the Romania’s sustainable development management.

But the mission in sustainable development can be supported by adequate conceptual tools, concepts that take into account the reality, concepts assimilated in those universities that have already turned into epistemic communities, assimilating the paradigm of instrumental rationality. In this paradigm, the tools are rational means used to reach a performable target. These intelectual tools are used in analysis, evaluations and interpretations that support the political decisions in the economical development topic in connection with the safeguarding of the environment qualities from our country. The new intellectual tools for the sustainable development at dell’arte level represent the discursive substance of the Industrial Ecology chapters.

To allege that sustainable development is identificable with a concern exclusively centred upon the environment condition, or the “preservation” of the environment, means an excessive simplification and an impoverish of the sustainable development concept. Brundtland Report defines “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” It is worth mentining that in accordance with the British economist John Maynard Keynes (1883–1946), the practical ideas from the field of economy as well as from society, have to be based on the intellectual support of a doctrinaire or of a phylosopher. The definition for sustainable development proposed by the Brundtland commission report was inspired, at least as intention, by the principle of inter-generations equity, a justice

distributive principle which was enounced by the American phylosopher John Rawls (1921–2002). But more than that, the commission coordinated by Gro Harlem Brundtland defined the sustainable development as a problem with multiple objectives which management requires a “the triple bottom line”.

During the years preceeding the Brundtland principles formulation, many social events associated with pollution and biodiversity reduction led to the consolidation of “crisis of the environment quality” concept, or “environment deterioration crisis”. The Brundtland and Agenda 21 principles showed in a discursive manner, the emergence of an acute and global environmental issue. Adopted by the signatory countries of the Declaration from Rion de Janeiro – 1992, Agenda 21 is an action programe for the 21st century, actions oriented to sustainable development obtaining, which means the struggle agains poverty and social exclusion, for sustainable services and consumer goods production, as well as for environmental protection.

Before enunciating the Brundtland principles, as well as Agendsa 21 formulation, the seriosity of the environment issues, the humanity faces with, had been revealed in the years 1960. The book written by the American environmental researcher Rachel Carson (1907-1964), intitled Silent Spring, published in 1962, is still an example for the environmental impact study presented to the public, which influences a major decision making. After having read Silent Spring, the American president John Fitzgerald Kennedy (1917-1963) decided to create an governmental organization, which was the precursor of the actual environmental protection agency from U.S.A.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

It was admitted the fact that the environment depreciation occurs just like a collateral product of the industrialization process and, that the environment does not have to be seen as an infinite resources reservoir anymore,

which has an unlimited capacity of regeneration. However, Rachel Carson pointed out in “Silent Spring” only the environmental issue, not the econoical one also. The economists and industrialists met for the first time in 1972 in order to find solutions in case of the environmental crisis; the same year, the report of the Club from Rome intitled “The limits to growth” was published.

1.1 The relation between the Strategy for Sustainable Development and Lisboa Agenda

A controversial matter is the relation of this strategy with Lisboa Agenda for economic growth and jobs. Complementary to the strategy of E.U. for socio-economical reforms, defined at Europen Council in 2000 (Lisboa Agenda), E.U. adopted a strategy as ambitious for the Sustainable Development. Although E.U. members allieged that sustainable development is the dominant principle of E.U. politics, in reality, the matter of economic competitiveness of E.U. in face of globalization has come to overlook the political agenda. The new Lisboa strategy has become the main objective of the Barosso Commission. The three piles of the Lisboa Strategy (economical competitiveness, social inclusion and environment protection) have often been compared to “three children”, out of which, one – comptitivity – gets more attention than the other two. In this process, the strategy of sustainable development has come to be reduced to the middle pile of Lisboa Strategy. However, the president Barroso pointed out the importance of sustainable dimension in his foreword dedicated to the strategy evaluation. “The strategy of Sustainable Development and Lisboa Strategy reciprocally support each other”, Barroso said.

1.2 Context

E.U. formulated for the first time the strategy of sustainable development at the European Council from Gothenberg in 2001. Although the E.U. treaties contain sustainable development strategies, their implementation still remains a problem. In February 2005, the Commission noticed that many unsustainable trends kept on becoming serious.

In 2005, the Commission started an evaluation of the Strategy for Sustainable Development. It published a critical evaluation of the progress achieved starting from 2001 and drew up a few orientations. The respective drill pointed out some trends in the respect of the situation comedown, of climatic changes, of public health, poverty and increasing social exclusion, as well as of the exaggerated exploitation of the natural resources and biodiversity diminishing. In June 2005, the statesmen and heads of government from E.U. adopted a declaration with regard to the principles for sustainable development, that explicitly alluded that “the new Lisbon strategy is an essential component of the sustainable development dominant objective”. In June 2006, the European Council adopted a revised strategy. The Council conclusions marked the beginning of a partnership between E.U., the member states, civilian society and business environment, having as an objective the sustainable development achieving. The Council ascertained that the progress was modest, even if at politics level, both E.U. and the member states had made significant progress, especially in the field of climate changes and clean energy. On the 14 of December 2007, the European Council saluted the progress report of the Commission from October 22, and insisted upon the necessity to give priority to the implementation measures. Also, it has been drawn the conclusion that the new strategy of E.U. and the national ones in the field of sustainable development have to be brought together.

In the developed countries, the legislative pressure with ecological character, the ecotaxes, technical norms and standards with ecological limitations for products introduction (ecological tax) have led to the modification of the goods and services producing firms' behaviour, in the sense of their ecologization.

The products and services are no longer accepted on the market if they do not accomplish the imposed conditions by the environment standards. The influence is evinced also in the relations between states, by not accepting on their markets the products

and services that do not respect the ecological standards. These restrictions become automatically commercial barriers for the products imported from other states.

The idea of sustainable development characterized by a special concern given the environment with the view to preserve it for the next generations use, has led to a mentality change at individual level in relation with the environment.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Once the economical development becomes more complex and more diverse, the relation man-nature enhances, it becomes more profound and more contradictory. The increase and diversification of social needs attract the social needs increase and the increase in investment goods requirement; the given conditions of production, imposing the economic growth increase, of the man's intervention in nature. As a consequence, the natural resources reserve is diminishing, the forest's capacity to recover is jeopardized by the depreciation of the environment quality and of the man-nature relation.

This relation is characterized by a continuous exchange of matter, energy, information and work, generated by the social need in continuous increase and diversification. Man, as an essential element of the natural system of the biosphere is, at the same time, the main element of the social system. In his position of bio-psycho-social being, man through his work, changes consciously the environment, adjusting it to his needs.

The biophysiological, cultural, psychological, psycho-social, material and spiritual needs of humans, with role of driving force and motivational factor of the country, are among the constitutive elements of social life, reuniting the existence and social conscience in a whole.

5. REFERENCES

- [1]. Gaf-Deac I, “Sustainable and ecoefficient development”, course support
- [2]. *** “Sustainable development in Europe – shadowed by competitiveness need?”, 2008