

METES-2020 CONFERENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF CURRENT SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Dušan BEVILAQUA - Miroslav RUSKO



PREFACE

The sustainable development of society represents a great challenge for today's civilization. It represents a chance to create a more human society, a more just economy, and a more civilized civilization. Thus, humankind now has the opportunity to create conditions for a society operating on the principles of cooperation, creativity, justice, participation and humanism.

Therefore, some ways of redirecting current human activities in the direction of abandoning the model of industrial development of society and transition to a sustainable model are increasingly being sought. It is based on the fact that the current industrial model has exhausted its development possibilities and the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century are marked by the search for a functional alternative to the industrial model of development. There are appeared a number of alternative economic and social theories of economic and social development aimed at redirecting society and civilization to a sustainable model of development. The new paradigm of development is gradually gaining more and more actual outlines, and already today it is possible to identify the basic characteristics of the possible future model of sustainable development.

For development to have a long-term positive effect, it must be sustainable. Sustainable development speaks of trying to ensure that the Earth's resources, we use for economic growth, are available to future generations. The attention now being given to the threats of global climate change is an example of how human freedom and human development can be undermined when the interests of economic growth and development are separated from those of the environment. The solution of current environmental problems is not only a question of a technical solution, which until recently was raised either as a response to an environmental problem or in a more progressive approach than a preventive approach. It should be a change in the value orientation of man as an individual, but also of society and of all humanity.

The concept of sustainable development speaks of a way of economic growth that meets the needs of society by creating welfare conditions in the short, medium, but especially long term ones. The concept is based on the assumption that development must meet today's needs without jeopardizing continued growth opportunities for future generations (for example, depleting non-renewable resources without finding alternatives, destroying life-ecosystems, triggering changes in natural conditions that significantly complicate human survival as biological species, etc.).

The importance of environmental and safety issues is continuously growing at present. In addition to the impact of human activities on the environment, more and more we notice not only quality of life but also the cultural and social environs.

The complex problem of how to integrate the growth of material people well-being with nature conservation has several fundamental moments:

- continuously reinforcing of the influence of economic activities on the environment,
- we are increasingly aware of the natural resources limitedness,



- limited nature of resources puts in front of the economic activities some fictitious boundary of permissible loads which, if exceeded, could cause adverse non-recurring changes in the balance and the functioning of nature,
- there is increased the role of environmental protection in economic and social life,
- there is strengthened mutual penetration and merging of managerial approaches and methods applied in the fields of quality, safety and environmental protection.

The issue of the protection of the environment is currently faced with several major issues, such as:

- intensive development of civilization increases demands on water consumption, which is currently considered to be one of the most precious natural resources,
- the development of aquaculture in the urban landscape, the availability and quality of water,
- in particular, due to the great economic pressure of retail chains for the construction of shopping centres, in the peripheries of cities and construction of plants and logistics centres "from scratch", the cities are disproportionately grown in the landscape, which is linked to other problems, which are among other things, compact soil (overbuilt and embedded in concrete soil zone), and the emergence of the brownfields, that are territories which no longer serve the function for which they were built,
- the noise in the environment created by human activities, in particular land, rail and air transport and industrial activity,
- municipal waste but also waste coming from production activities, way of dealing with the waste,
- reduction of biological diversity etc.

There are research institutes, community groups and NGOs all over the world working with various technological innovations to alleviate poverty and reduce the damage caused by the insatiable consumer culture. An important problem is that research and application is often carried out locally. It happens that this information does not become widely known, and then the whole cycle of research, development, application is repeated in another socio-economic space, and their counterparts in another part of the world may have already designed and tuned a similar technology. The development of appropriate technologies could markedly benefit from the application of open source principles.

Environmental protection and the routing of development of society towards such that will allow economic development, raising living standards and at the same time preserving the environment and resources for future generations, requires knowledge of the current state. Knowledge of the causes, which cause environmental problems and ways to prevent it, and how to reinstate environmental burdens, can contribute to a change in approach, not only in the area of production, but also consumption, use and the reuse of their products after the end of their the subsequent secondary use or disposal. The result of such knowledge should be qualitative environmental approach would be more appropriate, in the implementation of resources in production and consumption, which would not have arisen on the basis of orders or prohibitions, but should be based on the natural human knowledge.

A shallow overview of global environmental conditions will also result in rather bleak prospects for the sustainability of the world's major environmental systems. Billions of people are drowning in poverty, and even in the developed rich countries their unpleasant economic situation can be found. The optimistic attitude is that accelerated advances in technology will protect the global society even from global challenges such as climate destabilization. It is undeniable that technological developments have provided great benefits to humanity in medicine and many other areas, and that technology is truly developing faster.

Sufficient public environmental awareness in the environmental field is a fundamental and priority prerequisite for successful implementation of environmental policy in practice.

Sufficient public environmental awareness in the environmental field is an essential and a priority presumption of successful implementation of environment policy in praxis. Raising of public awareness on the issue of environmental protection is leading the public not only to a greater



awareness of the environmental context of the economic and social life of the society, but also to the increase of the quality of decision making by consumers, to raising the legal awareness of citizens and, consequently, to increase the protection of the environment and quality of life.

The aim of the arrangement of the 5th International Scientific Conference "METES 2020" [Motivation-Education-Trust-Environment-Safety] on February 21st, 2020 in Ružomberok was to spread information to the professional and scientific public, representatives of self-government and state administration, the exchange of experience and the presentation of new results in the field of motivation, training, trust, protection of the environment and safety.

CONTACT ADDRESS

Ing. Dušan BEVILAQUA, PhD.

Slovak Society for the Environment, Koceľova 15, 815 94 Bratislava | Spišská Nová Ves, Slovak republic

Assoc. prof. RNDr. Miroslav RUSKO, PhD.

Slovak Society for the Environment, Koceľova 15, 815 94 Bratislava , Slovak republic