

The ecological component of the social block of economic policy for setting up and development of integration associations of the countries with emerging markets

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Abstract. The article raises environmental issues of cooperation between the SCO member states. The author emphasizes the relevance of this issue and the need to consider the concept of "environmental capital" as a theoretical basis for the environmental component of the social block of the economic policy of the SCO member states.

Keywords: Shanghai Cooperation Organization, economic policy, emerging economies, environmental capital, environmental education

The need to highlight the environmental component of the social block of the state economic policy for the creation and development of integration associations of countries with emerging markets is due to many circumstances that are conceptually broad enough covered in the works of Russian authors and representatives of foreign organizations [1, 2].

Without considering in detail all these circumstances, we note one of them, namely, the deterioration of the environmental situation over a long period and its negative impact on the human environment in countries with emerging markets. In this regard, the purpose of this article is to highlight the environmental aspect of the formation of a social block of economic policy for the creation and development of integration associations of countries with emerging markets on the example of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and to consider the concept of "environmental capital" as a theoretical basis for solving environmental problems.

For countries with developing markets, environmental problems are especially acute, since the period of industrialization of economies in these countries and the transfer of "dirty industries" from developed countries left a legacy of a difficult environmental situation, which requires constant attention of all countries participating in the integration associations of countries with emerging markets and significant cost of all types of resources for its improvement in order to move to the "green" agenda.

At present, environmental issues are actively raised by the SCO member states, which we consider as a pro-integration association, that is, the directions for further integration movement in the field of economic cooperation, which are currently at the initial stage of agreement by the SCO

"family" states. Taking into account the fact that the countries of the SCO "family" occupy more than 60% of the territory of Eurasia, and more than half of the world's population live in these countries, the consideration of the environmental agenda within the framework of this organization is relevant and justified.

The basic document - "Development Strategy of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization until 2025" - states that the SCO member states "will develop cooperation in the field of advanced environmental technologies, renewable and clean energy sources, energy efficiency for sustainable development" [3]. In addition to these areas, the integration policy of the SCO countries is being successfully implemented in such joint projects as waste disposal, ecological well-being of cities, water resources use, phyto-forestry reclamation and others, which are contained in the Action Plan for the implementation of the "Concept of cooperation between the SCO member states in the field of environmental protection for period 2022-2024", which is an organic continuation of another document - "Concept of cooperation of the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in the field of environmental protection for the period 2019-2021 "[4].

Technical and technological projects in the field of ecology are aimed, first of all, at solving social problems that follow from one of the main goals of the creation of the SCO - increasing the welfare and living standards of the population of the SCO "family" countries. In this regard, it is natural to single out the ecological component of the social block of the economic policy of the SCO "family" states.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the closest relationship between the environment and the technological foundations of the modern economy. In 2020, quarantine measures in many countries negatively affected the global economy: according to the UN, in 2020 the world economy contracted by 3.6 percent [5]. At the same time, a positive consequence of lockdowns is that global carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, as calculated by the World Energy Agency, decreased by 5.8% in 2020, which is five times more than the fall in 2009 that followed the global financial crisis [6]. The SCO Green Belt program, which is being developed at the initiative of Uzbekistan with the aim of widespread introduction of resource-saving environmentally friendly technologies, is aimed at consolidating the trend towards a decrease in carbon dioxide emissions.

High levels of pollution of soil, water bodies and atmospheric air cause a difficult environmental situation in a number of SCO countries, which directly affects the health of the population. According to official data alone, about 400 thousand people die from lung diseases in China [5]. According to official data from the Ministry of Health, in the pre-pandemic year 2019 in Russia, 45.6% of newly diagnosed diseases were in the respiratory system [6].

Despite the high incidence rates associated with ecology, according to studies by Russian scientists, the best state of the environment among the SCO countries was observed in Russia. This

is due to the relatively small amount of emissions of pollutants into the atmosphere of factories, the amount of which sharply decreased during the transformation period (1992-2002), and a large area of forests and inland waters. The worst state of the environment was recorded for Pakistan and Uzbekistan, which is associated with a small volume of use of renewable fresh water resources and a large emission of greenhouse gases [9, p. 63]. In addition, on the territory of the SCO countries - in the countries of Central Asia, there is an ecological disaster zone - the region of the Aral Sea basin associated with its drying up. This area is home to 3.5 million people who suffer from the effects of pollutants and toxins that accumulate at the bottom of the lake and rise into the air.

According to Russian researchers, China ranks third in the ranking of the environmental well-being of the SCO countries, giving way to India, taking into account the later industrialization of this country and the development of production outsourcing, which is actively used by Western corporations [10]. Nevertheless, China, as a world factory, is the world's largest source of harmful emissions: more than 4 billion tons of coal are burned annually, and carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere are over 13 gigatons [7].

The SCO countries are characterized by the accumulation of environmental problems in large cities, which negatively affects the social indicators of the quality of life of the urban population. In this respect, the leaders are China (Baoding, Beijing, Xingtai, etc.) and India (Mumbai, New Delhi, etc.). In 2019, the countries of the SCO "family" developed a joint program - the Program for the Development of the Environmental Well-Being of SCO Cities, the implementation of which is part of the cooperation of the SCO member states in the field of not both environmental protection and health protection of the population of SCO cities.

The formation of the environmental component of the social block of the economic integration policy of the SCO countries, as countries with emerging markets, should be based, in our opinion, on a theoretical concept - "environmental capital".

The concept of "ecological capital" was introduced into scientific circulation by Russian researchers E.D. Platonova and V. Latun, who defined this type of capital as a set of investments in the preservation and improvement of the living environment (life activity), formed knowledge and co-evolutionary connections in the system "Man - Society – Nature" [11].

In the works of researchers, the investment nature of investments is naturally emphasized not only in maintaining the current level of the environmental situation in the SCO countries, since this level does not ensure the environmental well-being of the population of these countries in combination with economic growth. Mainly investments in the environment should be directed to the qualitative improvement of the natural habitat of the population of the SCO countries and the leveling of the environmental damage that was caused to nature for the sake of rapid economic growth.

Currently, investment flows of the leading SCO countries are directed towards creating a "green" economy based on renewable energy sources, achieving carbon neutrality, and reducing greenhouse gas and hazardous waste emissions.

China is one of the world leaders in the development of renewable energy, the implementation of reforestation and reforestation projects, and the achievement of carbon neutrality by 2060. This testifies to China's growing volumes of environmental capital and advanced investment in innovative technologies that allow China to implement the ambitious project "Ecological Civilization of the 21st Century" and move Chinese manufacturing companies to the principles of "Industry 4.0" / "Industry 5.0".

One of the elements of environmental capital is investment in environmental education and upbringing, as well as in the development of scientific knowledge along the line of co-evolutionary development "Man - Nature - Technology". Disciplines on environmental issues are included in the educational programs of primary, general and higher schools of the SCO member states. Many partner universities, united in the SCO Network University (SCO), have created training programs for environmental specialists. Thus, the Institute of Ecology, which trains environmental personnel for the SCO countries and conducts extensive research work aimed at ensuring the conditions for strengthening the environmental well-being of the population of the SCO member states, is successfully operating at the basic university of the SCO - RUDN (Russia, Moscow).

Thus, based on the example of the SCO member states, it can be argued that at present, environmental cooperation is the most important element of the social block of economic policy for the creation and development of integration associations of countries with emerging markets.

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