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Environment Protection as a Presumption of Sustainable Development

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Abstract.

Rapid economic growth and irrational use of natural resources in the last decades of the XX century have influenced the changes in the environmental sphere and to specific environmental problems. These processes in the global economy and society, caused a disturbance of the environment by increasing pollution of the environment.

Emerging problems of the entire human society can be solved by applying the concept of sustainable growth and development and raising awareness about the necessity of implementation of basic environmental standards in business. In order to reduce the harmful effects of production processes on the environment and to help meet the objective of sustainable development outlined at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio De Janeiro in 1992 the ISO 14000 Standards were created.

The essence of sustainable development is responsible development that meets the current needs a way to rationally use natural resources to ensure meeting the needs of future generations and environment protection.

Keywords: environment, environment protection, growth, sustainable development.

JEL Codes: Q44, Q01

1. Introduction

In the whole development of human society, man has sought to meet their environment and understand the basic laws of natural phenomena that occur in it to master the same and to achieve higher performance and a result of their work.

Global world environment at the end of XX and at beginning of XXI century is characterized by the scientifically and technological progress, which is escorted by constant and dynamical changes in the socio-economic processes. Technical and technological achievements were accompanied by demands for increased productivity and quality of products and services. In those times, business companies were focused on achieving growth in the volume of production whose result was the increase in profits. Therefore, imperative task manager has been achieving so called „economy of scale”, so the success of the company was measured by the quantity produced and sold products and services. On the other hand, these phenomena and processes in the global economy and society have influenced the changes in the environmental sphere and to specific environmental problems are gradually gaining multiply growing, global dimension. Increase the physical volume of production in response to the growing needs of consumers and society, caused a disturbance of the environment by increasing pollution of the environment (Premović, et al., in press).



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2. Environmental protection management

Dynamical economic growth and irrational use of natural resources 70th of the last century, have influenced the emergence of global structural crisis in energy and raw materials. “Key environmental areas of interest include climate change, water supply and waste water, air pollution, waste management and hazardous waste, and land use issues such as deforestation, desertification, and urban sprawl...Environmental protection is a practice of protecting the environment, on individual, organizational or governmental level, for the benefit of the natural environment and (or) humans” (www.library.thinkquest.org/26026/Environmental_Problems).

Disproportion in the development of individual countries and regions, caused shortages of certain products on the world market, which is its immediate consequence the sudden jump in the prices of scarce products, growth, unemployment and the decline in income - only confirmed the necessity of practical implementation of environmental protection management as a new management concept in everyday life companies.

“Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land. Environmental management is the practice of creating this harmony. It involves management of both the living and non-living components- all components of nature.” (Leopold, A. source: www.qfinance.com).

Following global environmental changes, in June 1972 in Nairobi, was held the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) coordinates United Nations environmental activities, assisting developing countries in implementing environmentally sound policies and practices. UNEP is the designated authority of the UN system in environmental issues at the global and regional level. Its mandate is to coordinate the development of environmental policy consensus by keeping the global environment under review and bringing emerging issues to the attention of governments and the international community for action. The mandate and objectives of UNEP emanate from United Nations General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 and subsequent amendments adopted at UNCED in 1992, the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of UNEP, adopted at the Nineteenth Session of the UNEP Governing Council, and the Malmo Ministerial Declaration of 31 May 2000

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_management).

Environmental management is a new concept for solving environmental problems, and it “includes organizational structure, processes, procedures, resources for the implementation of environmental policy and accountability in the region.” (Ivanović et al., 2005). It is „the process by which environmental health is regulated. It does not involve managing the environment itself, but it is the process of taking steps and behaviors to have a positive effect on the environment. Environmental management involves the wise use of activity and resources to have an impact on the world”. (www.wisegeek.com/what-is-environmental-management.htm)

We can conclude that the essence of the application of environmental protection management is to ensure the necessary conditions for the effective planning and operation of companies with the factors in the environment.

In order to reduce the harmful effects of production processes on the environment, and in response to the social responsibility of companies, are defined and specific environmental standards ISO 14000 which must adhere to managers.

„The ISO 14000 Standards are a set of environmental standards designed by the International Organization for Standardization 1994 to assure that businesses are environmentally responsible. The



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ISO 14000 Standards were created to help meet the objective of “sustainable development” outlined at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio De Janeiro in 1992. The ISO 14000 Standards include guidelines for waste disposal, use of natural resources, pollution control and environmental responsibility. The ISO 14000 Standards also include sets of tests and measures that help organizations and businesses measure the impact they are having on the environment. ISO 14001 is the corner stone standard of the ISO 14000 series. It specifies a framework of control for an Environmental Management System against which an organization can be certified by a third party.

ISO 14001 was first published in 1996 and specifies the actual requirements for an environmental management system. It applies to those environmental aspects which the organization has control and over which it can be expected to have an influence.

Other standards in the series are actually guidelines, many to help you achieve registration to ISO 14001. These include the following:

- ✓ ISO 14004 provides guidance on the development and implementation of environmental management systems,
- ✓ ISO 14010 provides general principles of environmental auditing (now superseded by ISO 19011),
- ✓ ISO 14011 provides specific guidance on audit an environmental management system (now superseded by ISO 19011),
- ✓ ISO 14012 provides guidance on qualification criteria for environmental auditors and lead auditors (now superseded by ISO 19011),
- ✓ ISO 14013/5 provides audit program review and assessment material,
- ✓ ISO 14020+ labeling issues,
- ✓ ISO 14030+ provides guidance on performance targets and monitoring within an Environmental Management System,
- ✓ ISO 14040+ covers life cycle issues.

Of all these, ISO14001 is not only the most well known, but is the only ISO 14000 standard against which it is currently possible to be certified by an external certification authority.” (Premović et al., in press).

3. Sustainable development

According to these social and economic changes in the world’s environment, at the beginning of the XXI century, the question of national economy development become quite different, so instead development theory based on „natural restruction“ in achieving high development rate in the long term, today dominant role has theory of sustainable growth and development.

Emerging problems of the entire human society can be solved by applying the concept of sustainable growth and development and raising awareness about the necessity of implementation of basic environmental standards in business.

The World Commission on Environment and Development was initiated by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1982, and its report, Our Common Future, was published in 1987.

It was chaired by then–Prime Minister of Norway Gro Harlem Brundtland, thus earning the name the “Brundtland Commission.” The Brundtland Commission began its work committed to the unity of environment and development. As Brundtland argued the environment does not exist as a sphere



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separate from human actions, ambitions, needs and attempts to defend it in isolation from human concerns have given the very word “environment” a connotation of naivety in some political circles. The word “development” has also been narrowed by some into a very limited focus, along the lines of “what poor nations should do to become richer,” and thus again is automatically dismissed by many in the international arena as being a concern of specialists, of those involved in questions of “development assistance...But the “environment” is where we live; and “development” is what we all do in attempting to improve our lot within that abode. The two are inseparable (Kates, R.W. et al., 2005).

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts:

- the concept of needs, in particular the essential needs of the world’s poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment’s ability to meet present and future needs” (WCED, 1987).

“Awakening of ecological consciousness” influenced the decision-Business Charter of Sustainable Development 1991st in which the environmental management marked a key determinant for sustainable development and the priority task of the modern enterprise. This Charter was proclaimed that ecology and environment protection must be integrated into the management of the company and that its promotion must be a continuous process, to ensure that employees are required to motivate and educate environmentally, that we must make a constant assessment of environmental consequences of any new processes and products, the company must assume responsibility for the behavior of their subcontractors and suppliers, that the company must be open to dialogue on environmental risks and engaged in joint efforts to promote environmental awareness and regularly informing all interested parties. A year later, 1992 in Rio de Janeiro held The First International Environmental Summit which adopted Agenda 21. Starting from the Business Charter of Sustainable Development to elaborate further principles for strengthening the role of business entities in the environment is very important. The Agenda 21 explicitly defined category of environmental management as one of the priorities of each business entity (Premović and Drašković, 2010).

In 2002, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, the commitment to sustainable development was reaffirmed. The 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development marked a further expansion of the standard definition with the widely used three pillars of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. The Johannesburg Declaration created “a collective responsibility to advance and strengthen the interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development—economic development, social development and environmental protection—at local, national, regional and global levels.”

The original emphasis on economic development and environmental protection has been broadened and deepened to include alternative notions of development (human and social) and alternative views of nature (anthropocentric versus ecocentric). Thus, the concept maintains a creative tension between a few core principles and openness to reinterpretation and adaptation to different social and ecological contexts.

“The basic focus of the sustainable development is society and its need for involving care for environment while social and economic changes are anticipating and planning. Sustainable development could be consider as a „roof concept“ which including many different ideas“ (Milutinović, 2009).



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According to Professor Agneš Boljević, the bridge between ecology and economy is sustainable growth and development. The essence of sustainable development is responsible for development or development that meets the current needs a way to rationally use natural resources to ensure meeting the needs of future generations (Boljević, 2008).

Sustainable development is a way of thinking about how we organize our lives and work so that we protect our most precious resource - Planet, a way to promote economic growth, rational utilization of resources, and environmental protection for the benefit of the quality of life. As a life philosophy, it is a complex and long-lasting process aiming to satisfy our today's needs, not destroying resources of the future generation! Defined like this as a responsibility toward environment, future generations and intensity of satisfying the needs, it can be applied as a national policy with different aspects: economic, demographic, social, cultural, urban planning, infrastructure, etc. (Sinadinovska-Shumar and Donev, 2010).

Sustainable development thus requires the participation of diverse stakeholders and perspectives, with the ideal of reconciling different and sometimes opposing values and goals toward a new synthesis and subsequent coordination of mutual action to achieve multiple values simultaneously and even synergistically.

4. Conclusion

Increase the physical volume of production in response to the growing needs of consumers and society in the last decades of the XX century caused variety environmental problems by increasing pollution of the environment. These environmental problems can be solved by applying the concept of sustainable growth and development and implementing the basic environmental standards in business.

Increasing awareness of environmental protection in the framework of sustainable development, contribute to the need to integrate environmental protection management as a new concept for solving environmental problems in the context of modern business.

Sustainable development has been defined in many different ways, but all definitions require a systematic and holistic approaches which will allow us to understand the entire world as a complex system. "The concept of sustainable development does imply limits—not absolute limits but limitations imposed by the present state of technology and social organization on environmental resources and by the ability of the biosphere to absorb the effects of human activities" (Kates, R.W. et al., 2005).

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