

UDC 101

## **SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AS THE INDICATOR OF ECOLOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS**

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It has been analyzed the system of social and ecological monitoring, which allows expanding indicator set of characteristics of the state and dynamics of society to the limits covering not only social processes, but all aspects of relationship between society and nature. The system of social and ecological monitoring allows obtaining the sociological information promoting sustainable development of society. It allows to consider in detail socially – ecological processes and the phenomena, quickly to find changes and general tendencies of transformation of such processes and phenomena, to analyze simultaneously all social subjects according to their role in the development of social and ecological processes, to provide use of new methods of environmental and social assessments. Indicator set of characteristics of state and change of society in the course of social and ecological monitoring extends to the limits covering not only social processes, but also all aspects of communications between society and nature.

Object of studying of social and ecological monitoring is a society and its life environment. The society loses signs of totality and alignment. It is shown as changeable set of local fragments which are poorly conformed to each other and therefore they comprise variety of scenarios of further development. As perceptible improvement of ecological situation is inseparable from rationalization of economy and growth of social involvement of citizens at the specific level of local community, this level is considered to be optimum for research. At this level features and possibilities of solution of local problems can be considered; its cultural, ethnic and religious features are taken into account, lasting experience of aboriginal population and its tradition is considered, equitable distribution of environmental risk in community is provided.

Receiving reliable information about changes in public consciousness, in public orientations, their influence on ecological consciousness of people on extent of their concern in the ecological situation, on ecological activity and factors inducing to this activity is possible only when performing large-scale social and ecological monitoring. Early warning of growth of social tension in regions and in the country in general, formations of the new ecological consciousness corresponding to the modern period of development of world civilization requires studying of public opinion by state bodies, public organizations, parties and political movements, scientists and experts, members of media and education systems. Ecological awareness is a basis of ecological thinking formation. It will allow changing focus of consumer society from thoughtless ruin and exploitation of nature to careful attitude to its resources, understanding of their authentic value.

Studying of public opinion on environmental problems by means of mass survey is necessary, but it is insufficient condition of forecasting of people social behavior. When considering public opinion as one of regulators of social behavior in the conditions of social and ecological intensity it is necessary to consider also the possibility of its change under influence, first of all media, rumors, activities of system of ecological education. Value of social and ecological monitoring is that it, except for fixing of changes of public opinion of the population, allows determining efficiency of specific actions for impact on public opinion of such factors as orientation and intensity of mass- media appeals to ecological subject.

**Key words:** social opinion, ecology, ecological consciousness, mass media, information, orientation.

The complication of the ecological situation makes obtaining of accurate information about environmental state and orientations of the population a necessary condition for designing and implementing of effective environmental policies. The effective functioning of the model of sustainable development will largely depend on how it will be linked with the different categories of the population, so it is important to use effective information not only about bio - and geospheric processes.

The system of socio-ecological monitoring must ensure the obtaining of relevant sociological information meeting the needs of the sustainable development concept for:

- detail study of socio – ecological processes and developments;
- efficiency in identifying the dynamics and general trends in changes of these processes and developments;
- simultaneous study of all social entities, respectively their role in the development of socio-ecological processes;
- ability to change the range and frequency measurement of the sociological parameters in the development of specific socio-environmental situations;
- ensure of the application of new methods of environmental and social assessments and studies.

The specificity of socio-ecological processes is that methods of obtaining information is very limited and reflect, as a rule, only incomplete visible side of developments. Incomplete information leads, respectively, to inaccurate decisions. Decisions, taken in the absence of sufficient information or ignoring it, are inadequate to the situation. In this case, there is no real management of social process, there is only the illusion. The subject and object of management drift apart. To avoid it, a controlled remove to a new model of social development should be based on the depth information about processes taking place in the society. In this case socio-ecological monitoring is essential.

The system of socio-environmental monitoring is a set of trained personnel and functionalized support that is created at regional, zonal – level in the interests of periodic comparable results of objective study of the reflection of environmental problems in the functioning of social communities and influence of social processes in the communities on the emergence and resolution of environmental problems.

Socio-environmental monitoring is a system of monitoring of changes taking place in the society and public consciousness, associated with the emergence of the real threat of environmental catastrophe, on the basis of research and analysis of interaction and mutual influence of environmental-physical and social processes and mass ideas about them.

It is to be considered as an integral part of the overall system of environmental monitoring in order to provide the bodies of state authorities, local self-government, economic, military and other structures, public organizations, experts and citizens all-sided objective information about the state and trends of development of ecological and socio-ecological situation in the country, region or certain territory. The purpose of the socio-environmental monitoring is timely information about the state of public opinion on environmental problems and possible methods of resolving them, identifying the links and mutual influence of environmental problems and social processes. Social and environmental monitoring research in the society will give priority, necessary information for making correct decisions

in the current crisis ecological situation.

Such opportunities are determined by the properties of socio-ecological monitoring:

- clear target aiming at the selection of the most important and necessary information;
- the presence of relatively constant set of monitoring options and sustainable response network;
- periodic repeatability of measurements of public opinion;
- comparability and comparability of research results.

These properties of socio-ecological monitoring allow:

- 1) to fix the status of the research object at a time, the dynamics of cause-effect relationships, contradictions and regularities, underlying its basis;
- 2) to perform diagnostics and forecasting of socio-ecological processes.

The social tasks of environmental monitoring is to study the following problems:

- the state and dynamics of different sections of public consciousness;
- specifics of environmental consciousness and behavior of different segments of the population;
- the attitude of various levels of population to the environment, any governmental decisions on this issue;
- the attitude of various levels of the population to the government's activities on resolution of ecological problems;
- evaluation in the public opinion of the environmental situation;
- the degree of social tension, readiness for any actions;
- dynamics of attitudes of different categories of population;
- rating of environmental movements and environmental parties, cause-effect relationships;
- dynamics of changes in public opinion on environmental problems as a result of mass-media activities;
- the degree of support for environmental movements and parties;
- attitudes towards different concepts of the state environmental policy;
- the overall level of tension in the region (area) and factors affecting it;
- changes in the orientation of the population due to environmental problems, etc.

The study of sociological records allows defining more clearly objectives in the field of formation of scientific ecological worldview. For achieving the most complete assessment and objective prediction of the social environment it is necessary to have a comprehensive account and analysis of the diversity of relations in the system, which includes, in addition to a person, huge number of factors, various in both origin and nature of the influence.

While socio-environmental monitoring survey indicator set of characteristics of the state and dynamics of society expands to the limits, covering not only social processes, but all aspects of the relationship between society and nature. The object of study of socio-ecological monitoring is a society and environment. Socio-environmental monitoring is aimed at studying socio-natural relations and patterns.

It involves consideration of all significant for social development interactions of different origin. It is carried out by periodic measurements of the state of public opinion using the

same methodology on the same sample. Interval of the research is determined by the nature and temporal scale of the factors affecting public opinion. The most approved techniques designed for the repetition of research from six months to a year (for mass surveys) and from three to six months (survey of experts). The choice of sociological methods for the study of public opinion in the context of social ecology requires consideration of the following points: it should be considered as a specific social phenomenon that has superindividual nature; the complex nature of the reflections of the environmental situation on the social behavior of communities requires the integrated application of methods of sociological analysis and correct procedures for data collecting and processing. Obtaining reliable information on changes in the public consciousness, on changing in public attitudes, on the impact of public attitudes on environmental consciousness of people, on their degree of concern, on the environment situation, on environmental activity and the factors that encourage this activity is possible only in the case of large-scale socio-ecological monitoring.

The study of public opinion is necessary to the bodies of state control, public organizations, parties and movements, scientists and experts, representatives of such important institutions as mass media and system of education, for the correct orientation in the socio-political and social-economic situations, timely prevent growth of social tension in the regions and in the country as a whole, the formation of the Russian citizens a new environmental consciousness, which is relevant modern period of development of world civilization.

Fundamental importance in the formation of a new type of thinking is the rapid receipt and dissemination of information. A large role in this process is given to publicity and availability of environmental information to the wide segments of the population. Concealment of data about the real state of natural systems in a particular region is not only immoral but criminal both before Russian people and all mankind. Environmental awareness is the basis of formation of ecological thinking, a prerequisite for a comprehensive evaluation of the technical innovations, transforming human activity in general. Due to environmental awareness will change the orientation of society from thoughtless destruction of nature, predatory exploitation to respect the resources of nature, understanding their true value. In practical terms, this would translate into a modification of the traditional legal and economic norms governing the nature of natural reality development. The experience of developed countries shows that the provision of all natural resources to the consumer on a reimbursable basis and appropriate legal protection status of ecosystems inevitably are refracted in a scientific and technical policy of the company and, ultimately, in the quality of people's lives.

Unfavorable ecological situation is one of the important factors of the socio-political situation in Russia. Insufficient social orientation of environmental policies and activities of departments and government agencies, enterprises of all ownership forms, undervaluation of the interests of the person, the role and importance of public opinion led to the fact that the influence of ecological conditions on social behavior and the orientation of the main socio-demographic groups of population is carried out in the direction of increasing socio-environmental stress. The study of public opinion on environmental problems with the help of mass surveys is a necessary but insufficient condition for the prediction of social behavior of people. Considering public opinion as one of the regulators of social behavior in

terms of socio-environmental stress, it is impossible not to take into account the possibility of its change under the influence firstly:

- mass media (Central, regional and local), each has a specific audience, its own socio-political orientation, pays attention to various environmental issues, etc.;
- rumors, including those originated as a result of leakage of hidden information in combination with its unintentional or deliberate distortion;
- activities of the system of ecological education, etc.

Currently, the feature of formation of public opinion on environmental issues is the negative-sensational presentation of information by most media. Public opinion inevitably reflects the state of crisis of ecological situation. In these conditions studying of mechanisms of formation of public opinion on environmental issues, an objective assessment of its current status, research-informed and socially responsible management has become a very urgent task of national importance.

The value of socio-ecological monitoring lies primarily in the fact that it in addition to fixing the public opinion of the population, allows to define effectiveness of actions on the influence of public opinion such factors as the direction and intensity of invoke of the mass media environmental theme, etc.

The adoption of the Russian Federation the concept of sustainable development as a national policy framework makes socio-ecological monitoring desirable element of the overall environmental monitoring system into the element of crucial importance.

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