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## **Ecological policy of Ukraine**

### **Abstract**

The aim of this article was to analyze the ecological policy of Ukraine and its impact on Ukrainian public policy and society. The paper presents a sketch of a problem of formulating policy and strategy on the country level. Several issues are taken into consideration: essence and meaning of ecological policy from the point of view of values understood as a stream of resources and lost opportunities, strategy types of strategies of ecological functioning of the country and its meaning for present and future development.

**Keywords:** ecological development strategy, ecological management, sustainable development.

### **Introduction**

The modern era of global economic, social and political transformations has updated and raised new ecological and economic dilemmas to the level of universal priorities. The concept of a comprehensive approach to environmental protection must include, in addition to measures aimed at combating the negative effects of business and production, also preventing damage caused by economic activity and the high-tech pro-ecological design and implementation of new technologies. Economists and politicians focus their attention on those occurring changes and their effects. In the condition of increasing the natural environment degradation, the responsibility of economic entities, the state and society for the usage and destruction of its resources is definitely increased.

With the development of the market economy, it is necessary to change the current system of economic instruments, moving towards heavier usage of market mechanisms in environmental protection, allowing to increase the impact of pro-ecological behavior of business entities and the whole society. There are not only different groups of economic instruments, there are also differences in character and design, in their effectiveness on producers and consumers as well as on the economy and society overall. There are also different conditions and possibilities of applying individual solutions.

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In most definitions of ecological policy, the emphasis is put on some aspects of meaning and function — aims, content, resources, determinants, influence etc. However, it is

important to note the socio-political proceedings of ecological policy as a premise of completion of various aspects of its meaning and function. Ecological policy proceedings mean shaping up and its actual functioning in economic, social and political institutions of the state.

Ecological policy proceedings allow the realization of its content and aim directly towards solving problems caused by anthropological influence, optimization of utilization of natural environment, solving specific problems of environmental protection by decreasing the pressure from the people and institutions. Content, forms and methods of conducting ecological policy must be precisely executed, and from the socio-political point of view, they should not be conducted as a political process.

This way, ecological policy will not be carried out exclusively on the plane of political development of society and is safeguarded against social, political, scientific, educational and cultural factors.

The policy of the country determines taking or refraining from actions by chosen state's institutions aiming to solve particular problems (Brown, 2000, pp. 14–16; Pull, 1999, pp. 22–24). It is the most important process for which country and governmental institutions are responsible.

Doing research on ecological policy, we have to distinguish between its specific resolutions and deliberate actions, the system of making political decisions. Governmental institutions adopt many resolutions influenced by its internal content and political logic. Besides there is an accumulation of decisions of episodic character caused only by economic and social claims, it can cause great delays in introduction of new laws. As an example, we can mention concept for Ukrainian ecological policy, which has been accepted eight years after announcing the country's independence. Starting from 1991 government approved many decisions in relation to ecological policy, which were dictated by its internal logic, but were not proceeding.

It was not until 1999, when national ecological policy was officially announced on the country's level, this finished the period of its formation and adjusting to new historical realities. The new stage of further development and refinement of Ukrainian ecological policy has just started.

Furthermore, we have to notice socio-ecological aspect of specific political actions in the context of ecological policy proceedings. Refraining from any political actions, when it is deliberate and effective, can be called politics as well. To illustrate it, the Ukrainian government have never taken any actions against passing ecological laws, but those laws were never carried out. In the past years, the Central Council of Ukraine and the Government of Ukraine have adopted many resolutions and laws concerning protection of environment but they were not carried out because of socio-economic reasons and financial crisis in Ukraine (Wasiuta, Wasiuta, Filipczuk, 1998, pp. 213–265; Wasiuta, 2000, pp. 70–87).

This way refraining from taking political action is an example of blocking ecological policy proceedings, it is conditioned by real situation within a country, where passed laws are not carried out or not considered. Such refraining from action, ecological and political “impotency”, cannot be really called as an ecological politics. The real ecological politic means taking action according to country's policy or

refraining from it, both with the purpose of solving problems. Lack of implementation of introduced laws is very disturbing. The understanding of its importance, because it helps to distinguish the politics among other kinds of decisions and behaviors, helps to see the structure, motives, goals and ways of carrying it out.

Ecological policy can be understood as substantial proceedings, which influence the state-run institutions and socio-ecological situation, which implement specific methods for its realization. Every person, institution or government can submit to his or her own view of ecological policy. Person can obey the rule of not throwing litter in the street or in the forest. Company can observe or ignore the ban on dumping waste into the atmosphere or water reservoir. People can influence the authorities, ecological policy, and the society as a whole, when the socio-economic development violates the ecological development or the human rights (for example when the chemical firm concentrates only on its profits, or when private business tries to influence the authorities). Public opinion can demand some corrections in the states ecological policy, which is carried out by the government and state-run institutions. Different institutions execute the country's ecological policy. Which are in charge of the legislative, executive and judiciary processes (Васюта, Васюта, Філіпчук, 2004).

The entities in ecological policy proceedings, cannot be divided as creators and contractors of legal instruments concerning ecology. They create a political and organizing chain of performed functions, the greatest one being the guarantee of ecological rights and human rights stated in the Ukrainian Constitution.

The State ecological policy proceedings can account for all the socio-political determinants only when the creators know and understand them. However, some aspects of ecological policy are quite elaborate. This is one of the reasons why the legislative and executive institutions might not be aware of or do not take into account ecological directives. This is because of the following.

Firstly, ecological policy proceedings allow for some freedom of interpretation. For example, the Ukrainian Constitution (1996, pp. 21, 24, 50) guarantees human ecological rights but it is understood by law courts differently according to the traditional understanding of resolution, according to court's logic and some socio-economical factors. The initial intentions of the creators of the policy can be modified and inappropriate in the given situation.

Secondly, ecological policy created in certain historical period can be based on outdated logic not supported by contemporary creators and contractors who work for contemporary institutions and have new needs. As an example of it, we can mention the policy of closing down nuclear plants. The first decision of closing down the nuclear plant in Czarnobyl became the base of subsequent regulations.

Thirdly, proceedings of ecological policy are influenced by complex of economic, social and political relations despite the premises and goals of its creators. To illustrate it we can mention complex relations of some industrial enterprises with the Ministry of Ecological Resources of Ukraine. Some companies manage to evade sanctions for deterioration of natural environment and do not see the necessity of its protection. Laws, regulations and directives of the president of Ukraine, edicts of the Government and decisions of the Central Council of Ukraine all support well-balanced management

of natural environment and try to prevent exploitation of natural resources. However powerful industry players, tries to lobby the authorities for concessions. Let us mention the AutoZAZ-Daewoo (today UkrAVTO) lobbying the government to ban import of foreign cars older than 5 years. Which was done after negotiating with European financial institutions in 2000 and resulted in permission for import of cars, which are not older than 8 years. This was abolished after a few months. Frequent changes of customs regulations. It all proves that despite the intentions of the creators of ecological policy it is under strong influence of anti-ecological, economic and political lobby.

Analyzing ecological policy proceedings, we want to concentrate on the outcome of the ecological and economic policy, passing over intentions and believes of its creators. However, the entities of ecological policy proceedings not only carry it out but also estimate political profits and potential hazards, trying to get politicians to support their ideas, analyze political offers and foresee its political results. The citizens expect the politicians to solve their life problems, vital social and ecological problems. It all makes up contemporary economic and political reality.

The evidence for this can be found in results of government election in 1998, where the Green Party of Ukraine succeeded and deputies from this party did almost nothing for environment during after that. As we can see, the creators and contractors might often mention the ecological policy, but do not feel obliged to carry it out, being occupied by some economically more profitable or simply easier and less controversial matters. Proceeding of ecological policy is closely connected with general aims of state's policy (Rymarenka ed., 1997, p. 415). American scientists distinguish many stages of political analysis, which have to be completed if they should to be effective: 1) stating the problem; 2) choosing the criteria of assessment; 3) stating the alternatives; 4) assessing the alternatives; 5) comparison of those alternatives; 6) assessing the results (Бациора, 2001, pp. 76–77). The political tasks crystallize to form objective needs, which politicians find among many economic and social aspects considering right aims and values.

Consequently, between problems that acknowledges and determines state's policy, and aims, which are proclaimed, is at the same time the real connection and wide difference. The other maintenance of ecological policy proceeding can be considered as a bridge between these two sides on a way to working out ecological problems, achieving the purpose of ecological policy as eventual result, that want to implement public authorities, public in accordance with the objective requirements of ecological imperative.

There are many ways of assessing criteria of ecological policy proceeding, but the best one is reaching stated goals. The final aim of all country's policies is solving problems (Бациора, 2001, pp. 79–80). Foreseen and expected result or state, towards which ecological policy has to strive, becomes a point of reference for all future failures and successes.

Being improper, and blur the aim of ecological policy is often viewed as the most important in its proceeding. However, as long as the aim of ecological policy has something to do with economic and social problems, it will be ambiguous and inconsistent. "Most problems concerning politics and ecology are really complex, it

is simply impossible to determine all possible solutions and their effects” (Бациота, 2001, p. 89). In state’s ecological policy, proceedings the executors of the law often have to reconstruct the original aims and premises, which were the basis of passed laws. Those aims and premises were known to the creators but were modified, and blurred by other participants of the proceedings.

State’s ecological policy — the core of all actions concerning environmental protection and nuclear safety. There were attempts to minimize the state’s role and the range of state’s ecological policy, the role of socio-ecological problems was played down to make it seem private matter, and not so important for society. Ecological policy has to integrate local private needs and actions with social problems and state’s policy. Pearsons says: “Being wrongly constructed, social problems are not distinguished, we do not know where one problem starts and the other ends. They overlap and are very complex” (Бациота, 2001, p. 90). Shaping the object and aims of ecological policy, and means, which are to be used to execute it, all possible doubts and explanations should be worked on by public institutions. They have to gain public support, before the talks about possibilities and technical solutions to ecological problems were started, and before the eco-political ventures are accomplished.

Present state of ecological policy in developed countries and ecological crisis in Ukraine show how important are geopolitical and social aspects of ecological problems. According to Ukrainian scientists M. Kiselow and F. Kanak “political solutions to important social problems can be effective and quite easy to manage in countries with stable economy. However, the nature of social problems changes, when finding the solution involves economic transformations. The Ukrainian problems are of the latter kind. There are no well-trying solutions and stable economy. In such hard circumstances the policy should be directed towards changes in lifestyle and well-balanced utilization of environment, those changes are approved by people” (Kiselow, Kanak, 2000, p. 166).

In liberally oriented democratic countries political parties compete for electors trying to win them over by their programmes, which support or are against present policy. As soon as they are in power, the parties carry out those programmes and react to new social problems, which come up. That is why informing people about countries ecological policy, understanding of its content and meaning are important in political proceedings of any democratic country.

Eco-political proceedings must reach high standards concerning application of scientific knowledge and reflecting real economic and social needs. Eco-political proceedings must take into consideration various businesses, its relations with numerous political entities and different fields of knowledge. For truly professional ecological policy, every aspect of it have to be carefully planned. In ecological proceedings professionalism, drawing from social studies and economics, knowledge of ecological issues, intuition and experience are all very important. Some prejudice or not supported speculations, biased solutions to environmental problems do not have anything to do with political analysis. The final criteria for efficiency of ecological policy proceedings is appraisal of degree of completion of chartered goals in its legislative, economic, technological and general outlook dimension. Efficient ecological activities depend

on knowledge, abilities, and implementation of planned undertakings (Васюта, 2003, pp. 126–127).

In this wide collective process of contradictions and collaboration, which engulfs an electorate, legislators, civil society, mass media etc, a cognitive element must be in the center of their combined attention, but has not to be dominated. In fact ecological policy proceeding is the discussion of terms, priorities, ways of working out ecological problems. In the cognitive comprehension of the attitude toward them by virtue of impossibility at once to reach to the irrefutable, conclusions confirmed practice must take part all, who needs to ground the proper political arguments, points of view and practical actions.

Eco-political ideas — are the core of ecological policy proceedings. Politicians and voluntary activists debate for and against those ideas. Political conflicts develop around discussions, which one of those ideas can be better, perspective, legal. It all overlap with political passions, which originate from people's understanding of justice, righteousness, opportunity. Sides in this conflict use legislative means, elector's votes and money, and create the political views of those to whom ecological policy applies.

Ecological policy proceeding has political character; it depends on preparation and introduction of different political arguments. Even though the final decision is influenced by many other factors, discussions about ecological policy and arguments concerning it are all vital for people. Being talked over among people, political arguments are getting somewhat more defined and formal for next stages of political process. Authorities, especially during election, are willing to talk about importance of ecological issues. Even though later it reluctantly accomplishes even in longterm and even as far as those fundamental ecological undertakings are concerned (Васюта, Васюта, Філіпчук, 2004, pp. 42–43).

Selection arguments is quite broad due to great number of social and ecological problems in every society. Those political arguments are eventually transformed into concrete offers, plans and issues, which the society wants to deal with.

The society react to political arguments and offers depending on how it sees the final outcome of the state's ecological proceedings. It cannot be contrary to socio-biological needs of individual people, and must create favorable conditions for development. If the state does not have worked out principles of ecological policy, or the public does not know it, any argument in its favor might not bring expected socio-ecological results.

Structure argumentations — is understood as elaborated mixture of offers, knowing what real situation is like, deductions, experts appraisal, statistical results, scientific researches, and different reservations and premises.

Peculiarity of eco-political argumentation is that it applies to social sphere, socio-political problems even if it does not directly influence the life of citizens and do not have effects of community and common interests.

Ecological policy proceedings have to be understood as part of social political process, and as such, it has to be monitored by society.

Ensuring ecological policy proceedings because of its social character has to be broadly discussed, different information must be checked, many sources analyzed

such as, requests of specialized committees, parliamentary committees, different socio-political groups and movements, scientific papers and articles in newspapers. However it is obvious, that open access to ecological information for all citizens and foreigners, or right to access the same data is inconvenient for authorities, which are responsible for carrying out decision making process (*Demokratija czerez ucztstije*, 1999, p. 7).

Political experts apply their knowledge into solving social problems, they explain how the society should conduct to diminish the anthropogenic and technological impact on environment. They need both biological knowledge and knowledge of economics. Environmental and biological studies do not research social systems, but are important in order to conduct ecological policy, analyzing statistical data, which is the basis of future solutions.

Ecological policy proceeding have a lot to do with social studies, especially political science, management, economics, law, sociology, philosophy, socio-economical history and many more. It is obvious, when we notice that eco-political problems — are social problems, which involve society, its development, structure and dynamics. This is why they are connected with all directions of country's development and public policy.

Although every analysis has individual character, political decisions are carried out using consolidated social knowledge. Effects of ecological policy proceedings is also a very important, it can come up to public expectations or disappoint it. The original interest in ecological issues evokes certain expectations. If evaluation shows that original problems are not solved or became more complex, the society has to look for new solutions, new answers to raised questions, new politicians.

In ecological policy proceeding there are often unexpected consequences. Economic dimension in the market economy is very important, it is connected with economic risk of market mechanisms, not eliminating the state influence (Girusow, Bobylew, Nowoselew, 1998). Scientists try to explain a human conduct in a natural environment or economic environment within the limits of general theory and have indirect influence on the processes of ecological policy realization.

Important position is taken by assessment of efficiency of ecological policy proceedings. It is not broadly understood, because there are no objective standards. Standards depend on what in given case is regarded as expenses, size of production, what is perceived as important in socio-ecological standards.

In the broad sense efficiency in utilization of natural environment means normalizations of the size of production, with constant consumption of natural resources, and the biggest possible savings of taxpayer's money. The term of efficiency of ecological policy, questions about connections between market and economic instruments raise, although it has been generally established that market instruments are more effective than administrative in the process of environmental usage and its protection (Wasiuta, 2012, p. 224).

The natural way of assessing the efficiency of ecological policy proceeding is assessing its direct impact as far as realization of its political goals is concerned, solving of specific problems in environmental protection, and realization of innovative, technological, economic programmes. It is vital to analyze the direct impact of ecological political proceedings considering all alternatives.

Focusing on changes in specific policy and political problems, those approaches aim to estimate the results of chosen policy, and not to explain its content (Brown, 2000, p. 55). The aim of such estimation of ecological policy proceeding is improvement and modification, that's why applied analysis of ecological policy proceeding plays such an important role, what at times can not be to a full degree repeated about its fundamental, theoretical aspect.

Specialists, who work on applied analysis of ecological policy proceeding, should not be biased, nor have unrealistic views or be erroneous in their reasoning, because they carry it out in the best interest of the whole community. Commonwealth, but not the particular interests of different entities should drive them. Their task of improvement of the whole system with the help of government, different enterprises, and the whole system of country's policy and suitable country's programmes. This process has to be open to public and clear, because both — the officials and citizens want to know if state's actions are going to improve present situation. It is especially important when ecological policy is carried out not by economic instruments, when there are no clear market impulses — profits or losses, increase or fall in demand — for measuring and assessment of its results. If ecological policy proceedings are logical consequences of premises and we can observe some empirical results, it gives us basis to call it rational. However, even if the aims of ecological policy are clear and logical, it is hard to estimate its future impact on environment and people (Wasiuta, 2014, p. 57).

Ecological policy proceeding are from the start full of contradictions, political methods and aims of it realization might not be precise, distorted, and immeasurable with the needs. Therefore, it will always be ambiguous and will raise many discussions about its influence and results depending on socio-economic interests. It all makes ecological policy proceedings so hard to assess. It will always be ambiguous, we have to try to analyze it as much as the results of it and observed outcome allow.

Guarantee of ecological policy proceedings should check final and indirect goals and predict final and indirect results. People often confuse those two types of goals and their results. They believe that every success in small and indirect goal is always leads to completion of final goal. In 60', 70', and first half of 80' soviet system convinced society to effectiveness of used instruments and methods in environmental protection, there were legendary "tales" about its great results (Lebiedinskij et al., 1987; *Gosudarstwiennoje uprawlenije...*, 1990; *Ochrana okružajuszej sredy...*, 1977).

Indirect goals of ecological policy — aim to create or reach the final result. We can say that final aim of Ukrainian environmental policy — is improving it to such a state when anthropogenic and technological impact will be minimized and most citizens will have enough socio-ecological agreement to guarantee the stability and comfort of life. For reaching those goals the government can apply different instrument with are indirect goals and give indirect results. Indirect results are perceived as improvement of socio-political situation and the prospect for completion of final results are better. As soon as between indirect and final goals and their consequences perceptible socio-political intercommunication is set, or its existence is assumed, the political prospect of working out ecological problems is improving. In this context the problem of reality of connection between indirect and final goals is actualized and



their consequences of achievement in the form of political or administrative decisions, embodiment of them into practice.

The moral standards of executors and creators of ecological policy are also important aspect of ecological policy. Ecological policy proceedings cannot be understood as looking for purely technical solutions to given problems. The moral, ethical aspect cannot be passed over. At present ecological policy proceedings can be understood only in the context of economy and ethic (Скалецького, Потапенка eds., 2011).

Most people, who joined the Green movement in Ukraine, do not look for achieving personal success, or personal comfort. The nature of eco-political proceedings force them to respect ecological and social priorities, and price them over personal comforts and individual interests (Марушевський, 2015, pp. 114–115).

At the same time, eco-political ideas reflect dialectics of social forces of grassroots movement, which develop along with economic forces. Because of it, in the Green movement of Ukraine there were a number of people, which did not have much to do with ecology. Therefore, we can see that authorities and ecology go hand in hand. Ecological ideas are powerful if they create reality, where both political and ecological problems are discussed and solved.

At the same time citizens are so biased against all the politics, they think that any political compromise is sure to fail and that politics is corrupted. They try to look for other then political methods of solving problems. Even the word “policy” has only negative connotations (Stegnij, 2000, p. 268). Additionally when political problems are very important and there is no sufficient information, there is a sense of vagueness, most citizens feel anxiety not knowing answers to their problems. Are we really affected by greenhouse effect? Are the lakes and rivers contaminated and not likely to be ever clean again? Ambiguous answers to those and other questions, allow us to understand the anxiety and lack of understanding of ecological policy, which is a part of state’s policy (Глуха, 2016, pp. 3–4).

## Conclusion

To solve ecological problems, ecological policy should be created with participation of all citizens, and it is vital to look for mechanisms of solving ecological problems. One of those mechanisms is market economy, which function without any “leading and oriented” supporting political structure, it is self-sufficient, operating based on principles of rational choices. Nowadays market economy if criticized in Ukraine, but to its advantage we have to notice that it runs all complex socio-economic matters with stability and self-control. J. Sax, who investigated economic mechanisms in market economy in many countries, says (1994, p. 328): “There is no universal recipe for economic transformations for every country — each country has to find its own way (...). No country can manage without basic economic institutions, but each country has to find its own economic characteristics, specific only for that country, which depend on history, culture, resources and tradition”. The potential ability of market policy to find solution to their ecological problems cannot be separated from solving socio-economical problems.

Responsibility of politicians to their electors — is valid problem of ecological proceedings. Politicians draw up their per-election platform, which should create the basis of their future proceedings, but they often leave it behind after the election. Politicians can do so because there is no institution, which can force them to fulfill their duties. Complaining about it, the electors have to admit that it is likely they would do the same thing being in their position. It proves that creating instruments which could force politicians to overcome temptation and contribute to commonwealth, would be one of important factors of ecological policy proceedings, support its ideology and consolidate the Green movement in Ukraine.

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