

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Social and legal aspects of environmental education and public policy

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The authors propose to create a heterogeneous system of social and legal aspects of environmental education of the population in the context of public policy with a control element and a clear hierarchy instead of the existing nonhierarchical, not qualitatively time-personal, and unmanageable homogeneous system. The authors note that the objects of planning and forecasting of the system of social and legal aspects of environmental education of the population in the context of public policy could be the directions of the efforts of environmental, law enforcement, power structures, educational institutions, mass media, and others on participation in the process of environmental formation cultures, the intended result of these efforts.

Keywords: Social and legal aspects, Environmental education, Law enforcement, Educational institutions.

Introduction

The shortcomings in the work of the existing system of information and legal support and public education in the field of environmental protection call into question the possibility of citizens' participation in the process of discussing and making environmental decisions. The ecological culture of the population today is being formed randomly, whereas it needs to be developed directly, providing people, especially young people, with environmental knowledge and environmental and legal information, prompting daily action to protect the environment. The positive changes that have taken place in society, the creation of the necessary conditions are crossed out by the lack of effects of a creative mechanism. In our opinion, the most serious drawback of the system is its unmanageability.

The organization of environmental education, the implementation of environmental information, and environmental legal support is one of the areas of work of state and public environmental organizations, the media, educational structures, law enforcement agencies, etc. However, in some cases this is not a priority in their work.

The lack of a clear and unified management system at the local, regional, interregional, and state levels determines the lack of necessary coordination, inefficient information interaction, the uncontrolled impact of the system on the environment, and, in turn, the environment on the system.

Methods

As a hypothesis, it was suggested that it is possible to ensure an increase in the level of ecological culture in our society only if a single managed system with a developed state and regional infrastructure is created, which can implement the principle of continuity and universality of environmental education, provide the necessary legal and information support to interested organizations and ordinary citizens.

The validity of the research is confirmed by the methodological validity of the initial theoretical assumptions, the adequacy of their level of modern development of science, the use of modern methods and methods corresponding to the goals and objectives of the research, the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the results obtained, and their introduction into practice.

The rights of citizens to obtaining and disseminating environmental information, access to it in conditions for the formation of legal, democratic, social states occupy almost the first place among the problems of environmental protection. Availability of environmental information serves as the basis for a number of other basic institutions of environmental law, social activity associations and citizens, effective activities of the state environmental management, proper assessment the impact of economic activities on the environment, and competent environmental state and public expertise.

Results and Discussion

The main means of successfully adapting the system to uncertain and rapidly changing conditions of the environment is an effective management mechanism that ensures the formation and implementation of such a mode of development that will provide the best results in the current situation.

Therefore, instead of the existing nonhierarchical, not qualitatively time-personal, unmanageable homogeneous system, we propose to create a heterogeneous system with a control element and a clear hierarchy. A qualitative change in the system will allow the following changes:

1. To improve the ability to monitor, plan, and predict in the internal and external environment.

Control is one of the most important elements of management. The existing forms of control are mainly one-time or periodic, which reduces its effectiveness and ability to take prompt measures to improve the management of the formation and development of the ecological culture of the population. The creation of a "system of construction", a controlled system, will, in our opinion, allow us to organize constant control over the development of this process (Dresner and Gill, 1994; Hren et al., 2021).

The objects of planning and forecasting could be the directions of the efforts of environmental, law enforcement, power structures, educational institutions, mass media, and others on participation in the process of environmental formation cultures, the intended result of these efforts. Planning could take place not only within a single region, as is often the case now, but also nationwide.

2. To provide on the basis of results of planning, forecasting, and constant control behind development of the situation a possibility of timely and correct response to changes of the environment, that is, decision-making and creation of the new action program which will provide the most effective result.

3. To mobilize all participants in the process to implement the decision. For example, to take some kind of environmental action.

Object of management, taking into account the purposes and problems of a system, will become: nature protection organizations; educational, law enforcement, and other structures; MEDIA; research organizations; religious associations (Krasny and Roth, 2010; Bywater, 2014).

The main functions of the management subsystem of the system of information and legal support and education of the population will be:

- Coordination at the state, interregional, regional and local levels of the activities of structures related to environmental education, information, and environmental legal support of citizens.
- Collection, analysis, and storage of incoming information.
- Planning for the future of activities on information and legal support and public education.
- Participation in cooperation of interested organizations (press services of ministries, departments, enterprises, mass media, institutions of science and culture).
- Establishment of working contacts with constructive movements (groups), authorities.
- Ensuring the possibility of public participation in solving environmental problems and ecologically significant activities (information, organizational, and other support) (Fisman, 2005; Ruban. and Shvedun, 2019).

The task of interregional, regional and local centers is the formation of managed, hierarchical heterogeneous systems at the interregional, regional, and local levels. Depending on the conditions, traditions, and capabilities of each particular region or several regions, centers can be created as a legal entity, as a structural unit of an existing organization, and can have a different form—from a fund to a joint-stock company.

The task of the state center will be to coordinate their work nationwide, interact with interested structures at the state level, and organize international cooperation.

For the successful functioning of the system, in addition to the control subsystem, we consider it necessary to create conditions for the organization of information interaction between elements of the control system, between the control system and the object, between the entire system and the environment (Tuohino, 2003; Hren et al., 2021).

As noted previously, today cooperation in the system of information and legal support and education of the population is often carried out through unparalleled (close to a gap) information channels, and there are no clear principles of its organization and common standards for the presentation of information. This caused the lack of the speed and reliability of information.

Thus, along with the creation of the management subsystem, it is also necessary to develop common standards for the presentation of information, to develop strictly defined principles of interaction, and to establish common, constant channels of information exchange.

In the course of scientific and practical work, we investigated this issue, as a result of which recommendations were developed, the implementation of which are necessary conditions for the successful functioning of the system, even with its most rational construction. Accordingly, the following directions were determined:

1. Training of qualified personnel in the field of new information technologies capable of solving the given task.

In addition, there was a risk that the system would not function efficiently, especially at the regional and local levels, due to the low level of readiness of potential users.

Thus, the following must be achieved:

- There is a need to increase and improve the level of preparation of information resource development and management sheets.

- To improve the quality of training in environmental education, information, and environmental support for citizens in order to enable them to use modern information resources.

To solve these problems, it is necessary to develop special educational programs, provide all specialists with educational and methodological literature.

The personnel problem is very important, since the result of an unskilled approach to the process of collecting and evaluating information with an existing abundance of information sources can be the construction of erroneous or deliberately false conclusions.

2. Ensuring continuous monitoring of the information interaction process in the system.

The forms and methods may be different, for example:

- Examination and evaluation of the effectiveness of the technologies used.
- Study of the current state of improvement and use of information technologies.
- Development of recommendations for their implementation.
- Analysis, compilation, and use of best national and foreign practices, among others.

3. Equipping all elements of the system with means of computer equipment and telecommunications, modern licensed software tools, and operating systems.

This problem is extremely relevant, since during the work we noted the low efficiency of traditional forms of information interaction, for example: publication of directories, reports, etc. The following reasons were noted:

- Low availability due to limited circulation.
- Loss of efficiency due to high inertia of the publishing cycle.
- The practical inability to browse and analyze the necessary array of information due to its presentation in a little visual form.

The means of access to information resources must meet the requirements of the user interface convenience, for example: having a universal software shell, having optimal volume-time characteristics, ensuring the ability to work on the network, and be licensed clean. In addition, given the financial constraints, they should be cheap and economical.

4. Ensure the creation and efficient use of existing national information resources.

For example, the creation of databases containing, if possible, complete information on the state of the environment, the practice of solving environmental-educational, environmental-information, and environmental-legal problems, the forms and methods of the very intensive search for missing information in domestic and foreign countries.

5. Creation of a single telecommunication space.

In the course of our work, we also concluded that a number of factors should be considered in implementing those directions:

- Use similar experiences from other countries, especially those with similar socioeconomic conditions.
- To correlate the pace of informatization with the real possibilities of different regions (finance, infrastructure, personnel).
- To have a detailed program for different levels of the system and others (Dresner and Gill, 1994; Heo, 2004; Fisman, 2005; Carleton-Hug, 2010; Bywater, 2014; Ardoin, Bowers, Roth and Holthuis, 2018; Hren et al. (2021).

When using telecommunication technologies, the main problem of communication is related to the provision of communication and data transfer. For the system of information and legal support and education of the population, given financial difficulties, an important parameter is the cost of traffic (tariffs for services). Today, the process of information exchange between the elements of the system is limited by the constant increase in prices for publishing, printing, and postal services, as well as the more expensive telecommunications communication channels available.

As noted above, traditional forms of communication are not effective enough. The most efficient is the use of telecommunication channels.

This determined the need to find new high-tech telecommunications tools that could ensure effective interaction within the system, with the environment, between this and other systems, and guarantee the timely receipt of information in full while minimizing financial costs (Carleton-Hug, 2010; Monroe et al., 2017).

However, for a number of objective reasons, computer networks have not become as widespread in our country. To date, none of the computer networks covers the entire territory of Ukraine. As a rule, they are focused mainly on business centers, that is, on large megacities. This situation can be explained by the poor quality of most public communication channels and the high cost of building new and more advanced ones.

Therefore, we have come to the conclusion that in order to ensure the necessary information interaction in the system, it is necessary to make more use of other opportunities. For example, today a number of companies provide an opportunity to use the country's television distribution network for this purpose.

Taking into account the objectives of the system under consideration, our relationship with the environment is structured as follows.

Functional subsystem of the environment

We conditionally divided the functional system into the following components:

1) Material production subsystem.

- 2) Subsystem of spiritual production.
- 3) Non-production subsystem.
- 4) Control subsystem (Tuohino, 2003; Krasny and Roth, 2010).

Material production subsystem

The task of this subsystem is to produce material goods through the preformation of a certain substance, on the one hand, and labor (physical and mental energy, psychoemotional forces)-on the other.

This system is one of the main systemic components of society, since society cannot exist without the material benefits necessary for people's lives. Accordingly, the impact on the system was very important, especially since other social relations were directly integrated with material production relations.

In this system, we identified the following elements: large modern production (industrial and agricultural enterprises, etc.); associations of small producers (cooperatives, unions, etc.); individual chalk producers (family production).

From the point of view of the system, large-scale production was of greatest interest, as the most significant source of potential environmental hazards.

The following groups will be affected by the system of information and legal support and public education in the field of environmental protection: (a) enterprise administration; (b) technical intelligentsia; c) labor collectives.

Information should be collected as follows:

- On the relevance of these groups to environmental issues.
- The priority given to these problems in collective and individual consciousness (priority of compliance with environmental rules, instructions, norms, laws).
- On the assessment (from an environmental point of view) by these groups of the enterprise's activities and others.

The impact of the system on these groups should be as follows.

a) Enterprise administration:

- Environmental training and retraining of employees.
- Development of recommendations for solving controversial environmental problems with public opinion.
- Environmental legal support (consultation, information).

b) Technical intelligence: Technical intelligentsia are an authoritative social group, so their influence on other social groups, both in the process of production and outside production, is quite large. Analysis of these sociological studies shows that many people receive environmental knowledge and information during an interview with friends, colleagues. In this regard, it seems necessary for us to particularly influence this group by organizing specialized information support. Representatives of this social group, who enjoy significant authority, will have a positive influence on their environment.

c) Labor collectives:

- Training and retraining of employees.
- Environmental education and information, taking into account specific needs.
- Presentation of visual propaganda on environmental issues in enterprises with highlighting the imperfections of certain production technologies.
- Development and implementation of environmental plans and obligations in labor collectives.
- Involving members of labor collectives in technical creativity and rationalization, taking into account the environmental factor.
- Organization of ecocenters and eco-clubs at enterprises and others.

Subsystems of spiritual production (science)

We define the priorities of the information and legal support system as follows:

- Organization of cooperation with research organizations.
- Recruitment of qualified experts and consultants.
- Information interaction and others.

Nonproduction subsystem (subsystems: information (media), health, culture) (Dresner and Gill, 1994; Shvedun, 2019)

Media subsystem: Despite the fact that on the one hand there is a tendency to conjuncture the orientation of the media, which leads either to minimal coverage of nature and security issues, or to the fact that environmental information is presented as a "horror story". On the other hand, the confidence of citizens in the media today is significantly undermined by the unskilled and unqualified approach to the coverage of various news, informational voices, for most media remain almost the only source of environmental knowledge and information.

Therefore, the organization of interaction with the media should be one of the main areas of work of the system. In organizing the work of the system, we consider it necessary:

- To determine the policy of interaction with various media, taking into account their rating.
- To organize interaction not only with Ukrainian media, but also with foreign media.
- To monitor media coverage of environmental issues.
- Monitor the dynamics of changes in public opinion as a result of the work of the media and others (Tuohino, 2003; Ruban and Shvedun, 2019).

In addition to organizing a dialogue with representatives of the media, based on the experience of the work, we concluded that under modern conditions it is also necessary to maintain a dialogue with sponsors and advertisers, since they largely depend on the information policy of the media. The impact of the system will be as follows:

- Environmental legal support for journalists (e.g. advocacy of their rights to environmental information).
- Preparation of initial materials for media employees, considering the regional specifics for writing articles, preparing reports.
- Training and retraining of media professionals specializing in environmental issues.
- Ensuring journalists' access to domestic and foreign environmental databases.
- Assistance in finding the necessary information.
- Provision of consulting support.
- Participation of the media in cooperation in the field of environmental education.

Involving of the media in the coverage of environmental actions, conferences, from the protection of environmental rights of citizens and others (Heo, 2004; Bywater, 2014).

Control subsystem: We believe that this subsystem includes two main elements. This is the power structure (legislative, executive, and judicial bodies) and the sub-regional or "informal" structure of power (political parties, influential social organizations, economic groups).

In our opinion, the interaction of the system with the near-plane structure cannot be predictable. It depends on a number of factors (economic and political conditions, the social situation in the country). It can be assumed that a stable and workable system interacting with the "formal" structure of power will also be capable of effective interaction with this structure (Dresner and Gill, 1994; Bywater, 2014).

Conclusion

Therefore, the most important is the organization of cooperation between the system of information and legal support and public education in the field of protection of the environment with the power structure, and, first of all, with the executive authorities. In this regard, information should be collected: On the views of representatives of the authorities on the environmental situation in the region, the country. Assessment of the priority of environmental problems by the authorities; The attitude of representatives of "formal" authorities (regional and local) towards environmental laws, decrees, and regulations adopted at the state level. Views on the practice of their application and others.

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