Chapter 26

Social Component of Sustainable Development and Quality of Life: Region of the Balkans, Eastern Serbia

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ABSTRACT

Sustainability is the basis for survival on Earth, as well as for the survival of mankind. Sustainability is connecting with growing population. Sustainable development implies the merger of the three components in a single unit. The first one is the economic viability, the second includes social sustainability, while the third is linked to environmental sustainability. The social component of development relates to the quality of life of people their habits and lifestyles. This chapter put emphasis on the social component of sustainability in Serbia that includes quality of life but also the index of human development. The results of PEST analysis of the Eastern Serbia will explain factors that affect the implementation of sustainable development in the Balkan region. With PESTEL analysis applied to the eastern part of Serbia, it can be observed a wider picture of social life in other smaller countries of the Balkans with similar economic and social characteristics such as Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Srpska, Macedonia.

INTRODUCTION

Since each activity, starting from the primary biological, through production, and eventually social, takes place in a particular environment, it is necessary to research environment factors that directly or indirectly have an impact on these primary activities. From the point of sustainable development, there are many factors that have impact on the quality of life of people in some region. These are political, economic, social, environmental... The region of the Balkans has always been interesting for studying various social movements and turmoil. Because of the fact that Serbia represents one segment in the region, it is interesting for observation Serbia in terms of social development (SD). Uneven regional development

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is evident in Serbia. On the one hand, Belgrade, Novi Sad (big cities in Serbia) and the region of central Serbia represent the developed regions, while on the other hand the regions in the south and east of the country stand out as less developed. In less developed regions, natural resources which can be used in a sustainable way, and which can improve the quality of life of citizens are more concentrated. The concept of sustainable use of natural resources can be considered as a substitution renewable energy resources with the non-renewable. Less developed regions in Serbia are abundant with renewable energy resources, and it is advisable to use such sources. The use of renewable energy resources also depends on the level of environmental awareness of a particular community. The region of Eastern Serbia includes cities such as Zajecar, Bor and Negotin which are among the larger centers of this part of Serbia.

This part of the county are rich in geothermal energy which are not used in the properly manner - these energy is irretrievably lost. To take advantage of the renewable energy sources and to raise social awareness to a higher level (when renewable energy sources is considered for using), the PESTEL analysis applied in the Eastern part of Serbia will point the implementation of sustainable development in this part of the region. PESTEL (in its original) analyzes the environment for a new market or analyzes an existing market, providing an overview of the external situation which can affect global business, or business operators. This analysis can also be applied in cases where some factors affecting a particular phenomenon are analyzed, in this case the factors that have influence on the application of sustainability and development in a particular region. PESTEL analysis that is applied in this chapter includes political, economic, social, technological, ecological and legal aspects of the development of the Eastern Serbia region that affect the quality of life of the examined part of the country.

**BACKGROUND**

Coordination of activities is a process in which, in addition to the economic level of industrial production, also observed the ecological level, i.e. the influence that human activity has on the natural environment. Considering the fact that human society has the greatest impact on the environment, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of the social component of development, which includes the quality of life. The problem of sustainable development is discussed on the world highest level, as evidenced by numerous documents. The UN document titled “Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED):Our Common Future”, in the 1987, presents one of such documents. The same year (1987), Gro Harlem Brundtland, a Norwegian politician, the leader of sustainable development and public health policy, presented basic recommendations for sustainable development in this report. That include long-term ecological strategies for sustainable development, up to and beyond the year 2000, as well as solutions of the environment protecting that can be achieved through better cooperation between countries at different stages of economic and social development. Although there is no generally accepted unique definition of sustainable development, it is commonly referred to the one from the Common Future Report: “Sustainable development is a development that meets the needs of the present generations without disturbing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” By the second definition, sustainable development implies a balance between resource consumption and the ability of natural systems to meet the needs of future generations (http://sr.wikipedia.org/sr/Održivi_razvoj). One of the definitions of sustainable development, from the same source, is: “Sustainable development is integral economic, technological, social and cultural development, in line with the needs of protection and improvement of the environment, enabling current and future generations to meet their needs and