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The Problems of Sustainable Development and Strategic Planning in the Studies of the Vologda Research Center of RAS*



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Abstract. The article introduces the readers to the most important studies of the Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences, which celebrated its thirtieth anniversary this year. The subject of the Center's scientific research was formed during a rather difficult period of the country's development. In the early 1990s, the Russian Federation embarked on a path of market transformation. The adopted liberal concept of the country's transition to the market proclaimed the incompatibility of the plan and the market. Planned management methods were rejected everywhere. The management paradigm adopted was based exclusively on market mechanisms for regulating socio-economic processes at all levels of government. This resulted not only in the increase of negative trends in the economy and social sphere, but in Russia's descent into the abyss. The situation required finding ways out of the crisis and the country's transition to a model of sustainable development. Scientific and methodological support for solving this problem at the regional level has become the core in determining the subject of the scientific studies of the Vologda Research Center of RAS. The purpose of the work is to make a review of the research carried out by the Vologda Research Center of RAS on the problems of sustainable development and strategic planning as one of the most appropriate tools for solving this issue.

Key words: socio-economic development, sustainable development, factors of sustainable development, management methods, strategic planning, methodological tools.

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Introduction

The laws of the world globalization processes largely determine the development of the world economy, countries, and territories. It is subjected to many factors that are highly dynamic, often unpredictable, and increasing uncertainty. The authorities' ability to respond to the emerging threats and challenges timely, using adequate forms, methods and tools for managing socio-economic processes is the key to sustainable development. This thesis is confirmed by the results of the socio-economic development of the Russian Federation, which embarked on the path of market transformation in the early 1990s.

The transition of the Russian Federation to market relations and the integration of the national economy into the world economy significantly changed the socio-economic development of the country and its constituent regions over all parameters. The course of radical reforms chosen by the liberals, the concept of incompatibility between the plan and the market, and the ill-considered reforms implementation brought the country to the brink of disintegration as a state. Socio-economic indicators have acquired a stable negative trend. The country was slowly but steadily descending into the abyss [1]. Later, evaluating the reforms effectiveness, Academician S. Glazyev and others were writing: "...over the years of reform the country was thrown back decades in terms of socio-economic development, and according to some parameters – to the pre-revolutionary period. There has never been such a long and deep decline in the level of production in almost all sectors of the domestic economy in the foreseeable period, even after the destruction of Hitler's invasion" [2].

By the end of 1995, it had become clear that the practical implementation of the chosen development model of the Russian economy did not justify itself. The country needed a new paradigm of transformation that could put it on the path of sustainable socio-economic development. At this time, the constructive part of the Russian society, including domestic scientists, enthusiastically took up the idea of developing and implementing

a new paradigm of global, regional and national development as sustainable development, which became widely known after the UN Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The concept appeared to be attractive for the Russian Federation primarily due to the principles laid down in its basis, as well as the objectives to be solved that were in tune with the objectives facing the Russian society [3].

The Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences (VoIRC RAS), which celebrates its thirtieth anniversary this year, did not stay on the sidelines when finding the ways to move to the path of sustainable socio-economic development of the country and its territories. Sustainable development of territories and municipalities in the context of socio-economic space transformation is one of the priorities of the Center's scientific research.

The article was prepared in order to introduce scientists interested in the problem of sustainable development, a wide range of readers with an overview of the research on this issue conducted by the Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Formation of the methodology for managing sustainable socio-economic development of the region

The problem of sustainable development has been of concern to the scientific community for several decades already. The Russian scientist V.I. Vernadsky laid its theoretical foundations. The system of his scientific views on the development of the biosphere [4] anticipated the awareness of global problems by the general public. Since the late 1980s, the theory and practice of sustainable development have been the focus of attention of scientists and politicians both in Russia and abroad.

Vologda scientists began to search for ways of bringing the regional economy to the path of sustainable development almost from the moment when the research organization was created in Vologda. The theoretical and methodological basis of these studies was made up of the works on the problems of sustainable development of the world

system by Kh. Bossel [5], V.I. Danilov-Danilyan [6], O.K. Dreyer¹, D. Meadows², N.N. Moiseev [7], V.V. Novozhilov [8], and others; the works on the sustainability of national socio-economic systems by S.N. Bobylev, V.M. Zakharov [9], N.P. Vashchekin, V.A. Los', A.D. Ursul [10], V.A. Koptyuga, V.K. Levashov, V.M. Matrosov [11], E.A. Kuklina [12], V.V. Popkov [13] and others. An invaluable contribution was made by research on various aspects of regional socio-economic systems and their transfer to the model of sustainable development, presented by M.G. Ganopolskii [14], O.P. Pchelintsev [15], A.I. Tatarkin [16], and research on the problem of sustainability of micro-level socio-economic systems and individual subsystems described in the works of T.M. Konoplyanik³, E.V. Makarova⁴, and others.

The very first works performed at the Vologda Research Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences under the academic supervision of V.A. Ilyin described scientifically based measures aimed at solving this problem. These works primarily focused the regional authorities on stabilizing activities in the leading sectors and complexes of the regional economy, determining long-term goals for economic and social development. The authors proved that, despite the most acute problems, it is unpromising to focus only on the current issues.

If until the end of the 1990s the Vologda scientists had studied certain factors of sustainable development, then from the beginning of the 2000s they began to study the issues of sustainable development of the Vologda Oblast and individual municipalities, which became rather independent in solving territorial issues under the conditions of transformation.

¹ Dreyer O.K., Los' V.A. *Ecology and Sustainable Development: Study Aid*. Moscow: URAO, 1997. 224 p.

² Meadows D.H., Meadows D.L., Randers J. *Beyond the Limits of Growth: Study Aid*. Translated from English. Ed. by G.A. Yagodin. Moscow: Progress; Pangea, 1994. 304 p.

³ Konoplyanik T.M. *Managing the Sustainability of Economic Systems: Theory and Methodology: Doc. of Sci. (Economics) dis. abs. 08.00.05*. Saint Petersburg, 2007. 37 p.

⁴ Makarova E.V. *Stability of the Economic System in the Conditions of Globalization of the World Economy: Cand. of Sci. (Economics) dis. abs. 08.00.05*. Ulan-Ude, 2006. 23 p.

It is crucially important to emphasize that the study of sustainable development was launched with the study of stability of sectors important for the region, i.e. agriculture, forestry and engineering, due to their importance for the economy of all municipalities and the Vologda Oblast as a whole. Their progressive development ensured sustainable economic growth and increased the region's development sustainability on this basis.

We should note that it is difficult to overestimate the importance of agriculture for the Vologda Oblast. However, in the first years of market transformations, this sector of the regional economy showed the deepest decline. The Vologda scientists (V.A. Ilyin, M.F. Sychev, A.A. Pashko)⁵ organized the monitoring of the situation in the agro-industrial complex from the very beginning of the Center's functioning. Its results indicated an increase in negative trends, destabilization of the situation in the regional agro-industrial complex. With the aim of getting agriculture and its individual businesses out of the crisis, accelerating its progressive development, realizing the capacity of agricultural production and stabilizing the situation in the rural economy, the Centre's researchers proposed and substantiated a set of measures for the regional policy. These measures included developing multiculturalism in agriculture, integration of economics and management through the creation of organizational and economic structures, able to concentrate the products motion control in the processing chain in the hands of the few, minimize transaction costs, increase the amount of profit received, become the initiator of attracting external investments, act as a guarantor of profitability and safety of the invested funds, be the manager of capital investments [17].

A research laboratory was organized in the Center in order to restructure the timber industry enterprises, to stimulate their activities to increase the production efficiency and products competitiveness, to increase labor productivity, to

⁵ Pashko A.A., Ilyin V.A., Sychev M.F. *Agro-Industrial Complex of the District: Reform and Development*. Vologda: VNKTs TsEMI RAN, 1997. 97 p.

reduce production costs (*S.A. Shulev (supervisor), Z.S. Mironova, T.N. Stateeva, and others*)⁶. Already in 1997, the laboratory employees, with the active participation of the Forestry Department, developed the “Concept of stabilization of the work and development of the timber industry of the Vologda Oblast for the period of 1998–2005” [18]. For the timely action of the regulatory impact to reduce the tension the researchers substantiated the necessity to organize regular monitoring and forecasting of forestry development [19]. Several years later, the Center’s researchers (*T.V. Uskova, T.N. Trunova, Z.S. Mironova, K.A. Zadumkin, A.V. Mironov, R.Yu. Selimenkov*) developed sustainability criteria for timber industry in the region and the methodology for its assessing, proposed the measures to improve the sustainability of the regional forestry in the long term⁷, substantiated the importance of forest certification for the sustainable development of the forest complex⁸.

Some works of the Center’s scientists (*V.V. Mitenev, M.F. Sychev, O.S. Moskvina, O.B. Kirik, and others*)⁹ were devoted to the problems of functioning of the Vologda Oblast industry, primarily the machine-building industry which is a field of activity having a significant innovative potential and can become a driver of economic growth. The machine-building complex played a special role for the city of Vologda which located 11 of the 14 most important machine-building plants of the region

which produced 98% of the products of large and medium-sized enterprises of the industry. The share of machine-building and metalworking made up 33% in the output of industrial products of the city, almost 50% in the main industrial funds. The plants employed about a half of those engaged in the Vologda industry. Consequently, the stability of a large city depended to a certain extent on the progressive development of machine-building. However, the analysis made it possible to identify deep negative changes that occurred in the industry during the period of 1991–2001, and trends that emerged during market transformations [20]. The research staff explained the strategy and tactics of regional industrial policy aimed at easing the crisis in the industry, identified the priorities for capacity contribution of machine-building in socio-economic development of the city and the region by stimulating innovation processes [21]. Later, the researchers substantiated the ways to stabilize and accelerate the development of the machine-building complex of Vologda and developed a comprehensive program of industrial activity and the formation of cluster systems¹⁰.

Without dwelling on other factors of economic growth ensuring the region’s sustainable development, we shall note only the main scientific works¹¹ that present the results of these studies [22; 23; 24 etc.].

In the early 2000s, a comprehensive study on the problems of managing the sustainable development of regional socio-economic systems was carried out (*T.V. Uskova*)¹². In the course of the study the author

⁶ Grachev V.V., Ilyin V.A., Sychev M.F., Shulev A.S. *Timber Industry Complex: Problems and Solutions*. Vologda: VNKTS TSEMI RAN, 1997. 52 p.; Mironova Z.S., Stateeva T.N., Shulev A.S. *Indicative forecasting of the development of the regional timber industry complex*. Ed. by M.M. Polyakov. Vologda: VNKTS TSEMI RAN, 2000. 59 p.

⁷ Uskova T.V. *Stability of the Timber Industry Complex of the Vologda Oblast in the Conditions of the Market Strategy of its Development: Final Research Report*. Executed by T.V. Uskova, T.N. Trunova, Z.S. Mironova, K.A. Zadumkin. Vologda, 2005. 82 p.

⁸ *Forest Certification as a Factor of Sustainable Development of the Forest Complex of the Region: Research Report*. Executed by T.V. Uskova, R.Yu. Selimenkov, A.V. Mironov. Vologda, 2011. 87 p.

⁹ Mitenev V.V. *Machine-Building of the Vologda Oblast: Problems and Trends*. Vologda: VNKTS TSEMI RAN, 2002. 111 p.; Mitenev V.V., Sychev M.F. *Innovative processes in machine-building of the Vologda Oblast*. Ed. by M.M. Polyakov. Vologda: VNKTS TSEMI RAS, 2004. 47 p.

¹⁰ *Development of a Comprehensive Program of Industrial Activity and Formation of Cluster Systems in the Vologda Oblast for the Period up to 2010: Research Report*. Executed by V.V. Mitenev, T.V. Uskova, K.A. Zumkin. Vologda, 2006. 124 p.

¹¹ Ilyin V.A., Selyakova S.A., Moskvina O.S., Uskova T.V. *Service Industries in the Town: Problems and Prospects*. Vologda: VNKTS TSEMI RAN, 2005. 108 p.; Moskvina O.S. *Industrial Policy – The Core of Economic Modernization*. Vologda: VNKTS TSEMI RAN, 2003. 135 p.; Anchukova N.V., Moskvina O.S. *Tourism in the Economy of the Region*. Vologda: VNKTS TSEMI RAN, 2002. 72 p.

¹² Uskova T.V. *Managing the Region’s Sustainable Development*. Vologda: ISERT RAN, 2009. 355 p.; Uskova T.V. *Sustainability of Territorial Development and Modern Management Methods*. *Problems of Territory’s Development*, 2020, no. 2 (106), pp. 7–18. DOI: 10.15838/ptd.2020.2.106.1

developed theoretical and methodological basis for sustainable development, defined the approaches to the essence of this concept, classified the types of resistance, and substantiated the internal factors which could increase the stability of the regions' socio-economic development. The researcher emphasized that the modern interpretation of sustainable development significantly expands its essence and the range of tasks to be solved [11; 13; 25, etc.]. In general, sustainable development should be understood as development based on the harmonization of social, economic and environmental subsystems, aimed at finding ways to meet the needs of present and future generations. The list of tasks includes accelerating economic growth and changing its quality; meeting the basic needs of the population; sustainable population growth; preserving and strengthening the territories' resource base, etc. [26; 27].

Having analyzed the works of the leading domestic and foreign researchers [5; 28; 29; 30; 31] the author provided a list of indicators characterizing the economic, social and environmental development, developed methodological tools for assessing the regions by means of calculating the integral indicator of sustainability. The researcher proved that regional public authorities have a wide range of methods and tools, the use of which in the practice of regional management can significantly increase the stability of regional socio-economic systems. Such tools as strategic planning of the regions' socio-economic development, public-private partnership, development of civil society, including strengthening the role of local self-government, should be top priorities [26].

Studies on regional systems stability factors

In the subsequent period, Vologda researchers focused on the study of factors and methods for improving the stability of regional socio-economic systems and individual subsystems in more details.

Given the fact that sustainable development first of all requires sustainable economic growth, this issue has become a priority in the VolRC RAS research: *T.V. Uskova (supervisor), E.V. Lukin, E.G. Leonidova, V.S. Orlova, L.V. Dubinicheva, A.S. Barabanov, O.I. Popova, T.G. Smirnova,*

*T.V. Vorontsova, A.E. Mel'nikov, etc.*¹³. The authors revealed the essence of economic growth, its theories, types and factors; analyzed the socio-economic development of Russia and its individual regions; identified the main problems, the solution of which contributes to the economic growth; assessed the factors of economic growth; defined the main directions of its intensification; offered the ways of economic growth acceleration [32; 33; 34].

In order to increase the competitiveness and sustainability of the economy, the researchers of the Center substantiated the need to solve problems that were fundamentally different from those that were solved at the stage of liberalization, privatization and raw material growth. In the most enlarged view, these tasks covered:

- stimulating production, creating and implementing a new economic policy aimed at increasing competitiveness and mutually beneficial cooperation between government and business;
- more active use of indirect impact methods related to improving the structure, increasing the volume of output and improving the industry efficiency;
- changing the vector of economic development toward a sharp increase in labor productivity and strengthening innovation processes in the production sector, using all opportunities to push innovations into practice;
- introduction of new forms and mechanisms for the implementation of the state's economic policy, including the definition of target priorities of activities, the creation of vertical corporate structures, clusters, industrial and financial groups, etc.;
- development of an institutional framework that ensures the integration of production, consolidation of market infrastructure, strengthening of professional training of enterprise managers, active dissemination of knowledge and practical experience [26].

¹³ Uskova T.V., Lukin E.V. *Economic Growth: Essence, Factors, Ways of Acceleration: Study Aid.* Vologda: VolRC RAS, 2018. 140 p.; Uskova T.V., Lukin E.V., Vorontsova T.V., Smirnova T.G. *Problems of Economic Growth of the Territory: Monograph.* Vologda: ISERT RAN, 2013. 170 p.; Uskova T.V., Dubinicheva L.V., Orlova V.S. *Socio-Economic Resource of Tourism: Monograph.* Vologda: ISERT RAN, 2011. 182 p.

In subsequent works¹⁴, the researchers of the Vologda Center thoroughly studied the factors of economic growth, primarily interregional interaction, individual branches of the regional economy, and their potential. Thus, in “Interregional Interaction as a Factor of Economic Growth”, the theoretical and methodological aspects of the development of interregional economic interaction are revealed, and its influence on the growth of the regional economy is proved. The article describes the state, problems and prospects of the interregional relations development of the Vologda Oblast. The authors estimate the degree of influence of various forms of interregional interaction on economic growth in the region; substantiate the strategic directions of intensification of interregional economic cooperation [35; 36].

Given the role of agriculture and forestry in accelerating the growth of the regional economy, Vologda researchers (*T.V. Uskova, R.Yu. Selimenkov, A.N. Chekavinskii, A.N. Anishchenko*)¹⁵ focused attention on the problems of the leading regional industrial complexes, the assumptions and resource capabilities, gave a scientific rationale for the targets and priorities of their development in the long term which included modernization of production, formation of institutional conditions for acceleration of development of scientific and technical progress, improvement of the mechanisms for managing innovation and investment activities, ensuring an increase in the level and quality of life, especially in rural areas on this basis [37; 38].

The studies of the potential of municipalities and the role of local self-government in ensuring sustainable development of the region make up a large share (*T.V. Uskova, E.A. Gutnikova,*

E.O. Orlova, A.N. Chekavinskii, S.A. Kozhevnikov, N.V. Voroshilov)¹⁶. Besides the fact that the local government plays a significant role in improving the welfare of the population and the provision of public services, it is entrusted with the task of creating institutions aimed at increasing economic growth, ensuring their sustainability and improving the competitiveness of territories and the country as a whole [26]. Therefore, the present and future of the state literally depends on the efficiency of local self-government, as it is the local government who has the potential able to solve many of the crisis phenomena in our society and create additional incentives for the development of the Russian state [39; 40].

The authors proved that strengthening the institution of local self-government will allow solving a number of strategic tasks of the agricultural sector and creating conditions for the progressive development of the agricultural sector of the region's economy. The priority tasks included:

- restoration and modernization of the production potential of the region's agro-industrial complex;
- creating conditions for effective and sustainable development of enterprises of all forms of ownership;
- increasing competitiveness of the region's agricultural complex by improving productivity and efficiency of agricultural production on the basis of its technical re-equipment, introduction of innovative technologies, cost reduction, organization of production according to international quality standards;
- sustainable development of rural areas, improving the standard of living of the rural population and reducing its lag behind the urban one [26].

For this purpose, the staff of the Research Center organized a monitoring of the functioning of the local self-government bodies (since 2006),

¹⁴ Uskova T.V., Lukin E.V. *Interregional Interaction as a Factor of Economic Growth: Preprint*. Vologda: ISERT RAN, 2013. 76 p.; Lukin E.V., Uskova T.V. *Interregional Economic Cooperation: Status, Problems, and Prospects*. Vologda: ISERT RAN, 2016. 148 p.

¹⁵ Uskova T.V., Selimenkov R.Yu., Chekavinskii A.N. *The Region's Agro-Industrial Complex: Condition, Tendencies, Prospects*. Vologda: ISERT RAN, 2013. 136 p.; Selimenkov R.Yu., Sovetov P.M. *Forestry Complex: Management of Innovative Development*. Vologda: ISERT RAN, 2012. 215 p.

¹⁶ Ilyin V.A. et al. *Local Self-Government in the Rural Area: Trends, Problems, Prospects*. Vologda: VNKTS TSEMI RAN, 2005. 196 p.; Ilyin V.A., Uskova T.V., Amelin D.E., Kol'ev A.A. *Local Self-Government on the Way to Reform*. Vologda: VNKTS TSEMI RAN, 2004. 28 p.

which allows assessing the state and the problems of this governing institution. The results of the monitoring become a good basis for finding ways to solve problems related to the transition of territories to the rails of sustainable development, as well as the ways to improve the efficiency of local self-government¹⁷ [41; 42].

A very important factor of sustainable development is the spatial factor meaning the uniformity and connectivity of space. At the same time, the economic space of modern Russia is sparse. We make this conclusion on the basis of the study of the VolRC RAS researchers (*T.V. Uskova (supervisor), S.A. Kozhevnikov, N.V. Voroshilov, I.A. Sekushina, S.S. Patrakova*)¹⁸ who showed that in the Russian Federation, as well as in the whole world, economic development is increasingly concentrated in agglomerations – megacities, the large and largest cities, i.e. the territories that are simultaneously the centers of knowledge production and innovation, financial, management and logistics centers, transport hubs and large consumer markets. They also increasingly concentrate the production of goods and services which pull together the financial and labor resources from other territories. These processes are becoming more and more stable. As a result, the socio-economic problems of territories that are not included into agglomerations are aggravated [43].

The problem of intraregional differentiation is discussed in great detail in the monograph [44]. It considers the theoretical and methodological aspects of the study of intraregional differentiation, structures the factors that determine the socio-

economic differences of municipalities, and suggests a methodological approach to a comprehensive assessment of the studied process. Based on the case of the Vologda Oblast, the authors studied the trends and factors of differentiation of the municipal and urban districts for the period of 1991–2015, presented a typology of municipalities by their development level, and evaluated the effectiveness of regional policy for the municipal entities development. The researchers developed a scientific and methodological approach to the regulation of intraregional differentiation, aimed at creating conditions for reducing its scale and overcoming its negative consequences.

Vologda scientists have repeatedly stressed that the high level of territories' differentiation is caused not only by the objective factors, but it is a consequence of the implemented socio-economic policy. The research works proved that it is possible to ensure a balanced development of all territories by adjusting the implemented socio-economic policy. Its main goal should be creating the most favorable conditions for the development of the economy and social sphere of municipalities by attracting private investment and improving the quality and availability of budget and municipal services. This requires the following measures:

- stimulating economic development by creating new growth points in the regions based on competitive advantages;
- coordinating infrastructure investments of the state and investment strategies of business, taking into account the priorities of spatial development and resource constraints;
- reducing the differentiation in the level and quality of people's life in every municipality by means of the effective mechanisms of social and budgetary policy ensuring the growth of human potential [45].

The issue of the budget and tax policy imperfection has been acute for more than two decades. The research works on the problems of budget policy and intergovernmental relations produced by the staff of the Research Center

¹⁷ Uskova T.V., Voroshilov N.V., Gutnikova E.A., Kozhevnikov S.A. *Socio-Economic Problems of Local Territories: Monograph*. Vologda: ISERT RAN, 2013. 196 p.; Chekavinskii A.N., Kozhevnikov S.A., Voroshilov N.V. *Institutes of Development at the Local Level*. Vologda: ISERT RAN, 2017. 200 p.

¹⁸ Uskova T.V. The potential of Russian territories' development. *Problems of Territory's Development*, 2018, no. 5 (97), pp. 7–17. DOI: 10.15838/ptd.2018.5.97.1; Voroshilov N.V., Gubanova E.S. *Intraregional Socio-Economic Differentiation: Monograph*. Vologda: VolNTS RAN, 2019. 187 p.; Uskova T.V., Voroshilov N.V. *Regional Policy of Territorial Development: Monograph*. Vologda: ISERT RAN, 2015. 156 p.

(M.A. Pechenskaya-Polishchuk, A.I. Povarova, A.V. Galukhin, K.A. Miklyaeva)¹⁹ convincingly proved that the government's fiscal policy aims not at actual but only at formal goals of economic growth support. The quintessence of the fiscal policy was its stabilization which led to severe fiscal austerity to the detriment of the territories' economic interests which creates the risk of prolonged stagnation for the domestic economy. The reasons for this situation should be sought in the inefficiency of public policy. After all the reformation changes, it was not possible to develop a scientifically sound and practically effective budget policy [46]. A high level of territories' differentiation, budget deficit, low potential of municipalities, especially at the settlement level is the result of such a policy. The vast majority of the municipalities do not have funds for development. The inter-budgetary reform did not solve the problem of reducing the local budgets' dependence on the financial assistance from higher-level budgets. The revenue base of the municipalities has narrowed. At the same time, local governments are extremely limited in their ability to influence its expansion. The mechanism for generating local budget revenues does not fully operate to expand the volume and improve the quality of municipal services to the population. Consequently, the current situation does not contribute to the economic development of most municipalities, the growth of the quality of life of the population, and the overcoming of the welfare mentality [47; 48].

It is possible to change the situation by conducting a gradual decentralization of income sources based on joint decisions and coordinated actions of all levels of government. This can only be

¹⁹ Pechenskaya M.A., Povarova A.I. *Regional Budgets: Trends, State, Prospects: Monograph*. Ed. by V.A. Ilyin. Vologda: ISERT RAN, 2016. 110 p.; Povarova A.I. *Methods of Increasing the Budget Security of the Region: Preprint*. Vologda, 2011. 40 p.; Pechenskaya M.A. Budget potential of municipal entities: assessment and directions for development (on the example of Vologda Oblast). *Studies on Russian Economic Development*, 2019, no. 4. pp. 120–131; Pechenskaya M.A., Uskova T.V. Topical issues of the improvement of intergovernmental dealings in the system of local government. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 2012, no. 1 (19), pp. 136–146.

achieved by strengthening the territories' economic growth and economic potential which will allow them to reach a new level of independence. While the transfer of taxes to the local level will encourage municipalities to develop their own tax base and expand the areas of advanced development [49].

Stimulating inter-municipal cooperation, strengthening financial, economic, socio-cultural, organizational, managerial and other ties between small and medium-sized cities and rural settlements, and developing social and engineering infrastructure are very important for solving the problems of territories and their transition to a model of sustainable development [43].

Therefore, creating conditions for territories' self-development by adjusting the regional socio-economic policy, strengthening the financial – and economic foundations and improving the regulatory framework of local self-government, increasing the effectiveness of interaction between state authorities and local self-government, expanding the list of tools to promote the development of the territories' potential are the most important tasks of state authorities [27], since sustainable development of territories is the key to the stability of the region as a whole.

In the context of a lack of budget resources for the development of municipalities and the region, it is fundamentally important to attract the resources of economic entities for these purposes, and therefore the study of interaction forms between government and business has become very relevant in the transformational period.

As we have already emphasized, the development of public-private (private-municipal) partnerships can increase the stability of regional socio-economic systems. These tools of state and municipal management have not been ignored by Vologda researchers for many years. The first research works on this topic were carried out in the early 2000s.

The paper by V.A. Ilyin (supervisor), T.V. Uskova, D.E. Amelin, D.P. Zharavin [50] describes the content and forms of interaction between the public and private sectors of the

economy at the municipal level²⁰. Methodological approaches and methodological tools for organizing cooperation between local governments and businesses are considered in the case of Vologda. Later, the researches deepened and revealed the mechanisms of interaction between local self-government bodies of the city and economic entities²¹.

In later works the VoIRC RAS researchers (S.A. Kozhevnikov)²² considered the essence, features, institutional and economic aspects of public-private partnership in such an infrastructure sphere as housing and communal services. The monograph summarized the foreign and domestic experience of public-private partnership in this area; determined the economic prerequisites and institutional and legal features of the implementation of the partnership between government and business. The author substantiated the necessity of developing and adopting a concept for the public-private partnership development, which would formalize the main forms and principles of joint projects, determine the directions of state policy for the partnership development, provide for the introduction of a new mechanism for managing housing and communal services facilities and the development of a new model for PPP projects financing [51].

In the conditions of weak financial and economic opportunities of the authorities, for the territories' sustainable development it is necessary to consolidate the resources of the government and business on the principles of social responsibility. This problem is also reflected

in the works of VoIRC RAS researchers (V.A. Ilyin, A.I. Povarova, M.F. Sychev, T.V. Uskova, E.D. Kopytova)²³. The resources of business structures can be invested in the development of public infrastructure, solving specific socio-economic problems, expanding the range and improving the quality of services, forming new growth points that contribute to increasing the sustainability of the region's socio-economic development [52].

Large corporations significantly affect territories' development. However, having analyzed the results of the production and financial activities of the largest ferrous metallurgy enterprises the researchers concluded that significant cash flows went past the budget. This is not in the interests of the state and society. In many ways, this situation is the result of the fact that Russia's state authorities have not yet created effective mechanisms to counter the oligarchs' dominance in the economy. As a result, the conflict between their interests and the interests of society is still not regulated by the law. This problem has a painful effect on the level of budget profitability, solving the problems of national and regional development, becomes a source of tension in society and does not allow moving towards a socially just state. The authors believe that the resolution of the conflict can primarily be found in a radical change in the paradigm of socio-economic policy and its reorientation to the needs of the majority of the population, the development of social responsibility of business [53; 54].

²⁰ Ilyin V.A., Uskova T.V., Amelin D.E., Zharavin D.P. *Local Self-Government: Interaction of Government and Business: Study Aid*. Vologda: VNKTS TSEMI RAN, 2006. 92 p.

²¹ *Development of Mechanisms of Interaction of Local Self-Government Bodies of the Town and Economic Entities: Final Research Report*. Executed by V.A. Ilyin, T.V. Uskova, E.O. Orlova, M.A. Dubinin. Vologda, 2007. 77 p.; *Specifics of the Relationship between Municipal Authorities and Private Business in the District: Informational and Analytical Note on the Research*. Executed by T.V. Uskova, E.O. Orlova, M.A. Dubinin. Vologda, 2007. 51 p.

²² Kozhevnikov S.A., Uskova T.V. *Public-Private Partnership in the Housing and Communal Services of the Region: Problems and Prospects of Development: Monograph*. Vologda: ISERT RAN, 2016. 148 p.

²³ Kopytova E.D. Corporate social responsibility: assessment methods and the regional dimension. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 2017, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 254–271. DOI: 10.15838/esc/2017.1.49.14; Ilyin V.A., Povarova A.I., Sychev M.F. *Influence of Metallurgical Corporations Owners' Interests on Socio-Economic Development: Preprint*. Vologda: ISERT RAN, 2012. 104 p.; Ilyin V.A., Povarova A.I. *The Largest Metallurgical Corporations and Their Role in the Formation of Budget Revenues*. Vologda: VoIRC RAS, 2019. 204 p.; Uskova T.V., Kopytova E.D. Corporate social responsibility current state and development tools. *Problems of Territory's Development*, 2016, no. 6 (86), pp. 7–19; Kopytova E.D. *Corporate Social Responsibility: Problems and Prospects of Development: Monograph*. Vologda: VoIRC RAS, 2017. 174 p.; Kopytova E.D. Revisiting the development of cooperation between the state, business, and society in addressing territorial development issues. *Economic and Social Changes: Facts, Trends, Forecast*, 2017, vol. 10, no. 5, pp. 197–215. DOI: 10.15838/esc/2017.5.53.14

The Center's researchers emphasize in their works that the formation of the ideology of social responsibility of business involves the popularization and promotion of corporate social responsibility, as well as the provision of methodological support to socially responsible organizations. The authors proposed a set of measures aimed at the development of corporate social responsibility, including: organization of educational events, exhibitions and fairs of social projects, information support in local media, holding a competition for the best socially responsible organization, assigning the name of a social partner to new social objects, developing a special certificate permitting the right to place it on their products, etc. [55; 56]. The authors also note that it is impossible to intensify this process without increasing the state's role in establishing partnership between government, business structures and the population and ensuring a balance of their interests. This is the interaction that has a significant potential, the use of which will give a synergistic effect for the socio-economic development of Russian territories [57].

Strategic planning as the main tool for the region's sustainable development management

The leading Russian and foreign scientists give priority to strategic planning among all the tools for managing the region's sustainable socio-economic development, as far as it is designed to determine strategic (long-term) and current development goals, and develop a system of planning documents that ensure the implementation of these goals. The thesis about the priority of strategy over tactics is fully confirmed by world practice. The stability of the regional socio-economic system and, as a result, the well-being of the population depend on how well strategic tasks are set and structured, how efficiently resources are used to solve them, and how consistent the planned activities are [26].

The need to use this tool for managing socio-economic processes in regional practice was justified by the VolRC RAS researchers from the first days of the institution's operation. This is evidenced by one of the first research works carried out under the supervision of *Doctor of Sciences (Economics)*

*V.A. Ilyin*²⁴. During this period, the concepts of socio-economic development of several region's municipalities were also developed²⁵. However, the scientific foundations of strategic planning were created later, taking into account the works of I.Ya. Blekhtsin²⁶, A.L. Gaponenko [58], B.M. Grinchel, N.E. Kostyleva [59], K.V. Kolomiychenko, V.E. Rokhchin [60], etc. They were presented in the work [61], carried out under the supervision of V.A. Ilyin²⁷. Based on this work, in the early 2000s, the Vologda researchers developed a strategy for the region's development²⁸. The research revealed the region's potential for moving to the dynamic and sustainable socio-economic development. The authors justified the strategic goal, the tasks and priority areas, including the optimization of the industrial structure in favor of socially oriented industries and the rapid growth of industries with high added value, the transition of agriculture to the rails of intensification, the development of production infrastructure, the activation of investment and innovation activities, the development of science and the introduction of scientific and technological progress in production.

²⁴ *Prospects of Socio-Economic Development of the Vologda Oblast in the Conditions of Transition to a Market Economy: Interim Research Report*. Executed by V.A. Ilyin, A.A. Pashko, P.M. Sovetov, M.F. Sychev. Vologda, 1992. 150 p.

²⁵ *The Concept of Socio-Economic Development of the Regional Center – Vologda during the Transition to Market Relations. Stage 2: Research Report*. Executed by V.A. Ilyin, I.L. Brauze, D.N. Bystrov, A.A. Pashko. Vologda, 1996. 175 p.; *The Concept of Socio-Economic Development of the Cherepovets District before 2002: Inf.-Analyt. Note on the Research*. Executed by P.M. Sovetov, M.F. Sychev, A.A. Pashko, V.A. Ilyin, A.S. Shulev. Vologda, 1999. 30 p.; *Main Directions of Socio-Economic Development of the Vytegorsky District for the Period before 2002: Inform.-Analyt. Note on the Research*. Executed by A.S. Shulev, V.A. Ilyin, M.M. Polyakov, N.A. Smirnova. Vologda, 1999. 38 p.; *Main Directions of the Concept of Socio-Economic Development of Vologda: Interim Research Report*. Executed by A.N. Zuev, T.V. Uskova. Vologda, 2000. 75 p.

²⁶ Blekhtsin I.Ya. *Strategy of Sustainable Development of Regional Systems: Preprint*. St. Petersburg: IRE RAS, 2001. 13 p.

²⁷ Uskova T.V. *Indicative Planning: a Monographic Study Based on the Materials of the City of Vologda*. Under the supervision of Doctor of Sciences (Economics), Prof. V.A. Ilyin. Vologda: VNKTS TSEMI RAN, 2003. 159 p.

²⁸ *Strategy for the Region's Development*. Coll. auth. under the supervision of Doctor of Sciences (Economics), Prof. V.A. Ilyin. Vologda: VNKTS TSEMI RAN, 2004. 228 p.

The researchers emphasized that the region's development strategy should connect the target programs, adopted by the executive and representative authorities, on certain problems of regional development with each other (in terms of resources, deadlines, and other parameters). Moreover, it is the authorities, who primarily needed such a strategic document, because the presence of a strategy will help clarify the ongoing socio-economic policy, implement strategic and spatial planning, develop infrastructure, and create incentives for business and motivation to work. The second destination is business. Clearly defined development goals and guidelines will allow business structures to see the prospects of the economy and the industries, and make their plans in accordance with them. It should be noted that territorial planning in market conditions does not limit the economic freedom of business entities, since the parameters of plans are not directive, but are indicative, advisory in nature. At the same time, the plans for socio-economic development of regions, enterprises, and firms should be formed in the outline of the development concept of the Russian Federation, which ensures the unity of the economic space. The final addressee of the Strategy is the population, which are to get a concrete idea of what they should await in terms of living conditions in a few years. The document's social orientation is to help to form a constructive ideological position of citizens, contribute to their consolidation and strengthening the political stability [62].

Later, the researchers proposed a significantly updated regional strategy for economic growth²⁹. The authors emphasized that in modern conditions "... a breakthrough in improving production efficiency is achieved by a new quality of economic growth. The essence of this process is to accelerate the pace of scientific and technological progress, enhance innovation, expand the use of the knowledge economy, and improve the social organization and management of society". The new version of the strategy significantly expands the

²⁹ *Regional Strategy for Economic Growth – 2015*. Ed. by V.A. Ilyin; VNKTS TSEMI RAN. Moscow: Nauka, 2007. 244 p.

time and content horizons. Considerable attention is paid to the theoretical aspects of economic growth based on innovation. The researchers assessed comprehensively the region's scientific and technical potential, presented the strategic aspects of the investment process intensification, improvement of timber processing, machine-building and agroindustrial complexes efficiency; proposed the measures to solve social problems, assessed the need for financial resources for the implementation of strategic objectives, grounded the mechanisms and methods of effective management of regional development. They noted that when implementing the strategic objectives of economic growth, priority should be given to increasing labor productivity and improving the quality of labor capital. It is a person with his or her knowledge and experience embodied in new technologies, who is able to provide a new quality of economic growth. The importance of creating a rational system for managing the implementation of strategic tasks, which should be based on the mechanisms of interaction between government bodies, business and the population, was emphasized. The authors point out that it is necessary to introduce technologies based on the extensive use of information and communication technologies into the practice of regional management. Special attention was paid to linking the direction of the region's development with the basic provisions of national documents of a strategic nature – the messages of the President of the Russian Federation to the Federal Assembly, program resolutions of the Government of the Russian Federation, decisions of regional public authorities [63].

The methodology of strategic planning was formed later [26]. The most important principles which were paid much attention to are scientific and purposeful character, social orientation, complexity, adaptability. The authors proposed an algorithm for the development and implementation of the strategy, methodological tools for selecting strategic goals and justifying development priorities, and revealed the mechanism for their implementation. The priority place in it was given to the system of continuous planning and project management.

The created methodology of strategic planning of the region's socio-economic development became the foundation for the development of strategies for the development of municipalities and individual sectors of the regional and municipal economy prepared by the Vologda researchers. They have played an important role in improving the sustainability of the territories.

Instead of conclusion. Prospects for the study of the region's sustainable development

The current understanding of sustainable development is much broader than its original interpretation. The Russian Federation and the world community as a whole are at the very first stage of transition to sustainable development. As the leading domestic experts in this field rightly note [64; 65], the enduring importance and role of the concept of sustainable development for world development remain. However, due to the emerging new challenges and the increasing influence of factors that have become a consequence, first of all, of scientific and technological progress, researchers face the task of further developing the methodology of sustainable development, finding ways to achieve it at the regional, national and global levels.

In this regard, given the complexity of the problem of sustainable development, its relevance for the Russian Federation and the regions, it is necessary to set the task of deepening scientific research, significantly expanding the range of issues that require the organization of scientific research. It is important to further develop the theoretical and methodological foundations of sustainable development; to study not only economic, but also social, environmental, managerial, and organizational factors of sustainability in more details, taking into account the Russian specifics, and improving the efficiency of their use. "When choosing the way to the future, Russia should take into account both global trends and the peculiarities of its own experience and geopolitical position, resource and environmental reserves, traditions and spiritual world of the population" [11]. The issues of state management of sustainable development, improving its effectiveness should also be studied, since the sustainable development goals presented in the Agenda³⁰ are reflected in the program and planning documents adopted at the federal level. We believe that Vologda researchers will contribute to solving these problems.

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