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ОТНОШЕНИЯ.**

**ECO-ORGANIZATIONS IN UKRAINE - POTENTIAL FOR AN
ORGANIZED NATIONAL ECO-MOVEMENT**

Prof. Samuel Chayen

*Economic Theory Department,
Oleg Balatskyi Academic and Research
Institute of Finance, Economics and Management,
Sumy State University, Sumy, Ukraine*

Tetiana Makarenko

Sumy State University, Sumy, Ukraine

Karyna Hnatenko

Sumy State University, Sumy, Ukraine

Today, the issue of environmental protection is an important issue for foreign policy in the international arena. Environmental protection is one of the global problems regarding the survival of human civilization. Therefore, states, international governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, including environmental organizations, are actively cooperating in this direction and are increasingly raising "environmental" issues. Ukraine is not an exception.

The growth of the economy of our country is accompanied by an increase in living standards that lead to intensive exploitation of various natural resources. Human activity is increasingly affecting the state of the environment. Preventing depletion of natural resources, protecting the ecosystem from degradation, preserving the purity of water, atmosphere and soil in Ukraine, and finding safe sources of energy - are the main tasks of ecologists.

Both governmental bodies and non-governmental organizations are concerned with regulating environmental protection. Some environmental organizations were created specifically for environmental purposes, others gradually became involved in environmental activities and took an active part in protecting the environment.

There are a lot of small and big ecological-oriented organizations in Ukraine. Most of them were created on the grounds of universities and with support of international organizations. In this work we will describe some of the most important Ukrainian Eco-Organizations and investigate their main role and activities.

Moreover, we have created a research group led by Prof. Samuel Chayen and the main purpose of our work is to conduct a survey of the environmental organizations in Ukraine, based on the experience of Israel's Environmental Movement. The aim of our research is to present a questionnaire to eco-organizations in order to reveal new trends and directions in Ukraine's environmental movement along with identifying new needs among environmental organizations. Based on our previous preliminary research, we have already identified that there are about 130 eco-organizations in Ukraine, 5 of them are international, 3 are from Sumy region and the rest of them are mostly situated in Kyiv region and Western Ukraine. We are sure that a strong environmental movement is an important basis for lobbying and making active change in government policy.

In the modern system of international relations, the tendency towards redistribution of functions among subjects of world politics has been determined. In particular, the influence of non-governmental institutions is increasing: they affect the global political process, both globally and regionally, exert direct pressure on governments, and control the implementation of international agreements, including environmental ones. Certain international non-governmental environmental organizations are quite influential in the world.

As we have already mentioned, Ukraine is a participant in five international non-governmental eco-organizations like World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Greenpeace, World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA), International Green Cross (Green Cross) and International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

For example, *Green Cross* is a highly influential organization. It is an international eco-organization, founded by Mikhail Gorbachev. It is represented in more than 30 countries, including Ukraine. The main mission of Green Cross is to take measures aimed at ensuring of a sustainable and secure future of the planet. This organization is also represented in Ukraine. Its program consists of three main parts: Social Care, Medical Care and Educational Care. The slogan of this organization is: "Give humanity a chance, give the earth a future".

Moreover, there are 125 eco-organizations, which were founded in Ukraine. Year-by-year the number of supporters of environmental organizations grows and their contribution to solving global environmental problems increases. These are some examples of Ukrainian eco-organizations: National Ecological Centre of Ukraine, "Green Front", the Kiev Eco-Cultural Center (KECC), Ukraine Nature Conservation Society, «MAMA-86» and many others.

For instance, *National Ecological Centre of Ukraine* is one of the first non-profit environmental organizations on the national level, founded in the independent Ukraine in 1991. The organization has offices in 24 regions of the country. The main purpose of the National Ecological Centre of Ukraine is to create a healthy

environment and improve the quality of life of people in Ukraine. It tries to convey the position of experts in environmental protection to officials who make the decisions in various sectors of the economy.

The NECU representatives are also actively involved in lawmaking, while keeping under control the legislative acts relating to the impact on the environment. For example, NECU activists consider their significant achievement of the adoption of the Law No. 2099a of October 04, 2016 on the assessment of environmental impact, since NECU has promoted it since 2014. It is expected that the law will help to create effective mechanisms for environmental assessment of the negative impact in most problematic areas.

It should be said that ecological problems are international in nature, therefore, it is in the interests of the international community, to be involved in the process of improving the state of the environment and creating an effective mechanism for solving environmental problems of even more countries and activists. Environmental organizations are an important driving force in defending eco-interests, since they can really influence government decisions and society.

In general, the correct way to relate to the environment is a matter of environmental education and self-education. As long as any individual inhabitant of the planet will not understand that nature needs to be preserved, the efforts of any government and environmental organizations will be ineffective. As we can see, activity of Eco-Organizations in Ukraine is widespread and has its results. All of them are important for support of a stable ecological situation not only in our country, but all over the world.

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