

ECOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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Corporate social responsibility is a free choice of company in favour of an obligation to improve the well-being of society, realizing the proper approaches of running business and selecting corporate resources. The social responsible conduct of the enterprise means the necessity of integration of economic, social and ecological aspects in its direct activity.

In the modern world the greater number of leaders of enterprises understand that the economic success of company depends not only on its commercial successes and high quality of products but also from its activity in the decision of the burning problems, concerning the territory where this company operates.

In a global economy, increasingly organizations have a responsibility to facilitate, demonstrate and promote corporate social responsibility. Long-term sustainability demands that organizations rethink their business goals and objectives from solely focusing on making a profit to corporate citizenship. Today, the impact of social responsibility is beginning to be seen in communities throughout the world – from human rights and labour practices to health care and the environment.

Questions of social responsibility are inseparable from the problems of ecology and the preservation of the environment. A company can not be considered socially responsible, if it realizes one or another program of population support, but ignores ecological requirements.

To the middle of the last century the predominant position in society had not preventive but reactive character. Nowadays the situation changes. Today many enterprises pay attention to long-term strategic ecological programs such as processing of wastes, introduction of alternative energy sources. A similar policy, directed in the future, shows the high degree of corporate social responsibility of such companies.

Necessity of introduction of this approach became the basic task of Global Agreement, initiated by Kofi Annan in July, 2000, and uniting today more than 2 900 companies from 90 countries of the world. The key for the Global Agreement is 10 principles. Three from these principles directly related to ecological activity, namely the requirements:

- to form careful attitude to ecology;
- to make initiatives concerning support of ecological responsibility;
- to stimulate the development and distribution of ecologically safe technologies.

It is necessary to note that, corresponding to the folded terms, enterprises try to inculcate the full set of management standards which includes in itself the standards of ISO 9000 (“Quality of products”), ISO 14000 (“Preservation of the environment”), OHSAS 18000 (“Health protection and industrial safety”), SA 8000 („Social Accountability”). With the entry of Ukraine into WTO, the presence at the company of certificate of SA 8000, along with the certificates of ISO 900, ISO 14000 and OHSAS 18000, gradually will become one of terms signing contracts.

If you consider that of all the institutions which are currently getting more powerful in the world, they are essentially the global players - the multinational corporations and the non-governmental organisations. The institutions which are decreasing in power and influence are those tied to the jurisdiction of the nation state - governments first and foremost. It is tempting therefore to look towards the multinationals to take a lead in creating solutions for global problems where the governments seem incapable of achieving co-operative solutions.

Corporations have been given the rights of an individual, and they have commensurate responsibilities. Just as it is a moral duty for individuals to contribute to the community in which they live, corporations are also obliged to contribute to their community through volunteering, charitable donations, sponsoring community and cultural events, and so forth.

Furthermore, the moral obligation of firms to be socially and environmentally responsible is greater than that of individuals, mainly because of the powerful role corporations play in society. Corporations own more infrastructure, physical capital, land, financial capital, and knowledge than governments, and they are the most powerful economic force in society today. As a result, they can significantly influence government policy, international trade, and the growth of national economies.

Another tendency should be noted, that was named «Ethic investing». It supposes that the choice of financial institutions for cooperation is also conditioned by ethic reasons. In this case the preference is given to companies that meet ecological criteria and criteria of social responsibility. Cases are known when investors under the influence of ecological organizations transferred their money from banks that invested in most threatening to the planet’s climate oil- and gas-producing industries.

Now Ukraine is in a position for one or two decades to form key institutional, public, civil bases on the creation of which the leading countries of the world worked 50-80 years. It concerns also the forming in Ukraine of the system of social responsibility. On this stage the state needs by means of regulatory mechanisms to form and to regulate the social responsibility of employers. And only after the getting of the required result, for example, of achievement of the European level, it is possible to pass from direct to indirect partnership.

The questions of preservation of the environment for businesses more and more go from limitations to possibilities. And here exactly leading and voluntary initiatives of business are very important. And one begin to understand that social responsibility and its ecological constituent is not temporal fascination but necessary factor of influence aimed to redirect the industry.

