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The Role of Communications in Public Management Policy Implementation Carried Out by Agriculture Sustainable Development

The article examines the basic concepts of sustainable development, identifies the current state of the agricultural sector and presents its characteristics and factors constraining its balanced development in Ukraine.

Based on the analysis of world experience, it was established that the issues of effective public administration are extremely important in ensuring the sustainable development of the agrosphere, especially in the context of decentralization of power in which with most of management functions are transferred from central to local authorities. In these conditions, the need to use effective public administration technologies, with communications playing a key role, has been proven.

The paper suggests a system of organizational and economic activities aimed to ensure the sustainable development of the agrosphere, among which the resource balance is singled out. The latter includes three main balance – subsystems, namely balance in resource potential reproduction; resource and technological balance; balance in using resource potential. It provides:

- ensuring structural proportionality between material and technical, labor, land and other resources used in the process of agricultural production and meets the needs in overall scope;
- selection of resources considering the peculiarities of modern technologies and climatic conditions;
- economical use of available resources, which provides for their combination into a single production process that provides high resource efficiency and maintains a dynamic balance between all components of the biosphere.

The role and place of foresight in the formation and implementation of sustainable development policy based on reconciling the interests of all stakeholders, especially elites, building consensus on the future for society as a whole and was grounded. The reconciling provides a choice of action depending on the future forecasting and ways to achieve it, as well as shows possible ways to adjust them.

The paper reveals the analysis of the survey conducted amongst private farmers (according to a multifactor questionnaire in which the answers for each statement ranged from 0 - strongly disagree, to 4) on the most constraining factors in establishing communication between private farmers and public authorities. It was found out that the most influential ones included distrust of public authorities, misunderstanding of communication processes and tools as well as a lack of desire to communicate,

It is proved that large-scale information and consulting activities, as an organized exchange of information, should be implemented through the strengthening of communication links between public authorities, private farmers, community, academicians and other business entities as well as through government support programs.

Keywords: *sustainable development, agrosphere, decentralization, communications, public administration, resource balance, foresight, web platform, information support*

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Роль комунікацій в процесі реалізації політики публічного управління сталим розвитком агросфери

У статті досліджено основні концепції сталого розвитку, та означено сучасний стан аграрної галузі, наведено її характерні особливості та чинники, що стримують її збалансований розвиток в Україні.

На підставі аналізу світового досвіду встановлено, що у забезпеченні сталого розвитку агросфери надзвичайно важливого значення набувають питання ефективного публічного управління, особливо в умовах децентралізації влади, за якої більшість управлінських функцій передається від центральних органів на місце. У цих умовах доведена необхідність використання дієвих технологій публічного управління, серед яких ключова роль відводиться комунікаціям.

Запропоновано систему організаційно-економічних заходів, для забезпечення сталого розвитку агросфери, серед яких виокремлено ресурсну збалансованість, що включає три основні баланси-підсистеми: баланс у процесі відтворення ресурсного потенціалу; ресурсно-технологічний баланс; баланс у процесі використання ресурсного потенціалу і передбачає:



- забезпечення структурної пропорційності між матеріально-технічними, трудовими, земельними та іншими ресурсами, що використовуються в процесі сільськогосподарського виробництва і в загальному обсязі відповідає потребам;
- підбір ресурсів з урахуванням особливостей сучасних технологій та природно-кліматичних умов;
- ощадливе використання наявних ресурсів, що передбачає таке їх поєднання в єдиний виробничий процес, який забезпечує високу ресурсовіддачу і одночасно збереження динамічної рівноваги між всіма компонентами біосфери.

Обґрунтовано роль і місце форсайту у формуванні та реалізації політики сталого розвитку, який базується на узгодженні інтересів усіх стейкхолдерів, передусім еліт, створення консенсусу щодо майбутнього для всього суспільства і передбачає можливість вибору варіанта дій залежно від прогнозування майбутнього, тобто фактично спрямований на проектування майбутнього і пошук шляхів його досягнення, а також показує можливі шляхи їх коригування.

Наведено аналіз опитування ОСГ (за багатофакторною анкетною відповіді в якій для кожного твердження були в діапазоні від 0 -категорично не згоден, до 4) щодо найбільш стримуючих факторів налагодження комунікацій між ОСГ та органами публічної влади, який засвідчив, що найбільший вплив мають: недовіра до органів публічної влади, нерозуміння процесів та інструментів комунікації, також має місце відсутність бажання комунікувати.

Доведено, що широкомасштабна інформаційно-консультативна діяльність публічній сфері, як організований обмін інформацією, має реалізовуватися через посилення комунікаційних зв'язків між органами публічної влади, ОСГ, громадою, науковцями та іншими суб'єктами господарювання, через державні програми підтримки.

Ключові слова: *сталий розвиток, агросфера, децентралізація, комунікації, публічне управління, ресурсна збалансованість, форсайт, веб-платформа, інформаційне забезпечення*

Problem formulation.

The concept of sustainable development, which provides for economic stability harmonization with social welfare and environmental security, has recently become the most widespread among the concepts of civilizational development. Against the background of the current general instability, agricultural sector requires a special approach to solving this issue due to its quantitative, qualitative and structural imbalance caused by the irrational production structure, lack of adequate state support for agricultural production, excessive depletion of natural resources [1]. In addition to the problems of inefficient organization of rural development, their depression, insufficient diversification of activities, unemployment and impoverishment of the rural population, the growth of anthropogenic pressure on the environment contribute to it. Giving priority to economic growth, current social and especially environmental tasks are solved on a residual basis with the rural population living the standard remaining quite low. However, it is becoming increasingly clear around the world that development is not just about production increase. The new paradigm emphasizes the local definition of

the development needs, which includes non-economic or non-industrial indices, such as quality of life, equity and social participation [2]. Therefore, there arises the question on what aspect should we focus on? Should it be productivity increase, health and social conditions improvement, human resources development or the environment preservation for future generations?

Analysis of the world's leading countries experience reveals that the issues of efficient public administration are vitally important in ensuring sustainable development. It is especially important in the context of decentralization of power, in which most management functions are transferred from the central to lower levels and become their own task. In these circumstances, there is an urgent need to use effective public administration technologies with a key role played by communications. It is only reliable information links between all levels that can provide for the effective operation of public authorities.

In particular, T.V. Sivak [3] believes that rethinking the role of communications in public administration has led to understanding the need to move from an informing model to a model of interaction in management



decision-making, although communications have always been an important component of development strategy for both a state and an institution.

Analysis of recent research and publications has shown that much attention has been paid to the issues of agricultural sector sustainable development by domestic scientists such as O. Borodin, Yu. Lupenko, B. Popov, I. Prokop, P. Sabluk, A. Tretyak, M. Khvesyk, O. Shubravskaya, V. Yurchyshyn [4-8] etc. These scientists argue for the need to ensure sustainable development with a strong emphasis on the society well-being.

O. Amosov, R. Voitovych, N. Galkalova, Yu. Habermas, V. Dreshpak, O. Kandzyuba, O. Kravtsov, G. Lasvel, N. Luman, V. Piskotsky, V. Mazur, I. Matyushina [9-18] and many others studied the problems of information and communication technologies and the formation of modern science of communication in the public sphere.

However, despite the large number of papers on sustainable development of agriculture and current studies on the formation of effective public management and administration for social development of both Ukraine and the regions, it should be noted that the establishment of effective communication policy in public management of sustainable agricultural development remains unsettled and require in-depth study.

The aim of the study was to study the theoretical foundations and applied aspects of the role of communications in the formation and implementation of public policy for the management of sustainable development of the agricultural sector.

Research methods.

The following research methods were used to achieve the above goal: system-analytical, analysis and synthesis methods were used to justify the development of communications in public management of sustainable development of the agriculture; generalization method - to process of research and experimental data on the formation and development of the public management system of sustainable development in Ukraine; comparative method - to compare foreign and domestic experience of effective communications introduction in public management of sustainable development

of agriculture; empirical - to understand the experience in applying the program-targeted approach in public administration, questionnaires, interviewing farmers and UTC representatives; statistical data were processed with the statistical method.

Results.

The research showed that the current state of the domestic agriculture does not meet the requirements of its powerful resource potential, the cost of various resources per unit of output is much higher compared to leading countries due to its inefficient use. The reasons for the higher resource intensity of domestic agriculture are related to the objective features of the productive forces and the consequences of the economic system functioning. The current structure of the industry is determined by productive forces. The economic consequences include technical and technological lag, especially in the small-scale sector with subsequent violation of the structural balance between crop and livestock production, and the exports have become raw materials oriented. With its most fertile chernozems in the world, high educational, intellectual potential of labor resources, Ukraine is far behind the leading European countries in terms of yield, animal productivity and rural development. That is, the preconditions for Ukraine's transition to sustainable (balanced) development model are currently unfavorable. Due to many factors, the potential of economic, environmental and social resources for sustainable development of our country has undergone significant destructive changes. The current conditions of the competitive environment have made the domestic agriculture dependent on the level of using scientific and technological progress achievements as well as on relevance, completeness, reliability of the information used and its analysis timeliness, depth and quality. And it is information and consulting activities in Ukraine that are extremely unsatisfactory, because today the modern manufacturer is not ready to pay for information, and scientists have not yet learned to sell their intellectual property.

However, despite the complexity of the situation the agricultural sector is currently in, it has a significant resources potential. Its mobilization can change the situation for the



better and become the basis for its gradual transition to the sustainable development model.

We believe that solving this problem demands to develop a comprehensive system of organizational and economic arrangements with resource balance ensuring to play the most important role. Resource balance implies:

1) ensuring structural proportionality between material and technical, labor, land and other resources used in agricultural production and meets the needs in general;

2) selection of resources taking into account the peculiarities of modern technologies and climatic conditions;

3) economical use of available resources, which provides for their combination into a single production process with high resource efficiency and maintaining a dynamic balance between all components of the biosphere.

That is, it is a long-term provision of the proper ratio of production and human resources with the preservation of the natural environment.

Resource balance includes three main balances-subsystems: balance in the process of resource potential reproduction; resource and technological balance; resource potential balance. Therefore, the resource balance creates a new form of relationship with the natural environment, and needs are met within environmental constraints, which improve the welfare, working and living conditions of present and future generations, maintaining a dynamic balance between all components of the biosphere, rational use and reproduction of natural resources using production wastes.

We believe that to be able to meet social, economic and environmental challenges modern agriculture producers, farmers and private farms need to receive the latest information via a wide range of methods and tools, including local media and ICT. According to world experience, sustainable development is impossible without the creation and functioning of an effective system of interaction between government and society. Such communicative interaction not only plays an extremely important role from the point of view of public influence on management decisions taken by the authorities, it also is of great importance for the

formation of the image of transparent subject of power. It also comprises understanding the essence of the communication process and the legal framework for the activities of public administration in the field of public relations by the subject of communication [19].

It is worth mentioning that positive changes taking place in the world's leading countries are associated with a significant impact of local and regional processes on the development in general. This influence is also transformed into a purely political process of decentralization of power through increasing the role of local authorities at different territorial levels. In these conditions, the formation of sustainable development policy "top-down" becomes ineffective, as it limits the use of local potential for endogenous development. Therefore, there is a constant search for new models of public administration, which provide for both horizontal coordination of central executive bodies, and vertical one - between central and local authorities. This kind of transformation changes the role of central governments - they become responsible for working out common rules, controlling and coordinating mechanisms in implementing sustainable development policies at all territorial levels when it is necessary to influence the development of all regions, not just the underdeveloped ones. Among the new functions that have arisen in the central governments of many countries in the new model of governance, the following are worth noting in the formation and implementation of sustainable development policy [20]:

- facilitating the search for consensus and communication between regions and sectors, including the definition of goals, time frames and spatial boundaries;

- collecting and analysis of adequate data and information, formation of databases on the needs and opportunities for regional development, strengthening the dialogue between central executive bodies;

- development of legislative, financial and administrative systems that regulate complex hierarchical types of coordination;

- the function of "arbitrator" in resolving conflicts between different areas of public policy and regions, including the definition of political responsibility for the final decision.



In addition to the above, a forecasting technology - foresight - should play an important role in the formation and implementation of sustainable development policy as a systemic tool to influence the formation of the future. Such technology is based on reconciling the interests of all stakeholders, especially the elites, creating a consensus on the future for society. Foresight provides the ability to choose the course of action depending on the "vision" of the future, i.e. it is actually aimed at designing the future and finding ways to achieve it and it also shows possible ways to adjust them.

According to V. Martin [21], foresight is one of the most modern methodologies of strategic forecasting organized as a carefully planned systematic process. In contrast to traditional technologies, foresight involves participation of many experts, and sometimes interviewing certain groups of the population interested in solving the problem.

As for Ukraine, we believe that the inefficiency of public administration is caused by the lack of integral parts of the management process - strategic planning and forecasting. For example, Ukraine has adopted the Sustainable Development Strategy "Ukraine -2020" which defines the key areas of the reform, but the strategy has not been implemented due to the lack of a coordination mechanism that would coordinate the timing and decisions taken by central and executive authorities, local governments and lack of resources ensuring and accountability for the implementation of the declared results.

That is, today, the readiness of society (public administration bodies, academicians, business representatives, the public) to discuss the prospects of socio-economic development of the region or community is extremely important. Foresight involves the creation of a network of stakeholders with all tools of strategic communication between the levels to be involved. Establishing and maintaining permanent communication links between the subjects and objects of public administration, the use of special means of information exchange ensures and directly carries out the management process. The need to establish and maintain communication stems from the very essence of public administration as a purposeful influence to achieve socially

significant and socially defined goals. It involves mandatory awareness of this need by public administration, as well as regulation and coordination of communication activities of these entities.

This was confirmed by the 9th UN Round Table (in September 2004, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The participants declared and actively promoted the idea that communication is a process necessary primarily to facilitate dialogue and assess the situation. The final resolution of the Round Table contains a few points that are worth mentioning. First, it must be remembered that even when we mention environmental or natural problems, resource management, "communication for development concerns people", these problems cannot be solved simply by applying a scientific approach without taking full account of people's knowledge and their perception of the change. The second point concerns the role of communication, which is considered a two-way process aimed at supporting all stakeholders and facilitating the assessment of problems and identifying strategies that lead to change [22].

It should be noted that nowadays public administration as a form of interaction between subjects and objects of government is inseparable from communication since considering the needs and position of the object of government makes the basis of democracy.

According to O. Babatunde [23], communication, by its nature, is the most important component of meaningful participation that can result in an active exchange of knowledge and ideas necessary for successful problem identification and the solution planning. Therefore, communication goes beyond "communication" and passes into the sociological dimension.

Therefore, we conducted a survey of heads of united territorial communities considering the role of communications in public administration. The survey aimed to determine the role of communications in the development of efficient united territorial communities. Nine out of ten respondents noted that the level of communication between local governments, the community and business was satisfactory while

agriculture producers and private farmers noted the lack of information and low level of communication with public authorities (78% of respondents) and 97% said they were not willing to pay for the information. Currently, private farmers and small-scale producers do

not have information on effective business running, 89% of respondents do not know what sustainable development is and how to work on a sustainable basis; 30% do not believe they can get quality information from scientists at domestic universities (Figure

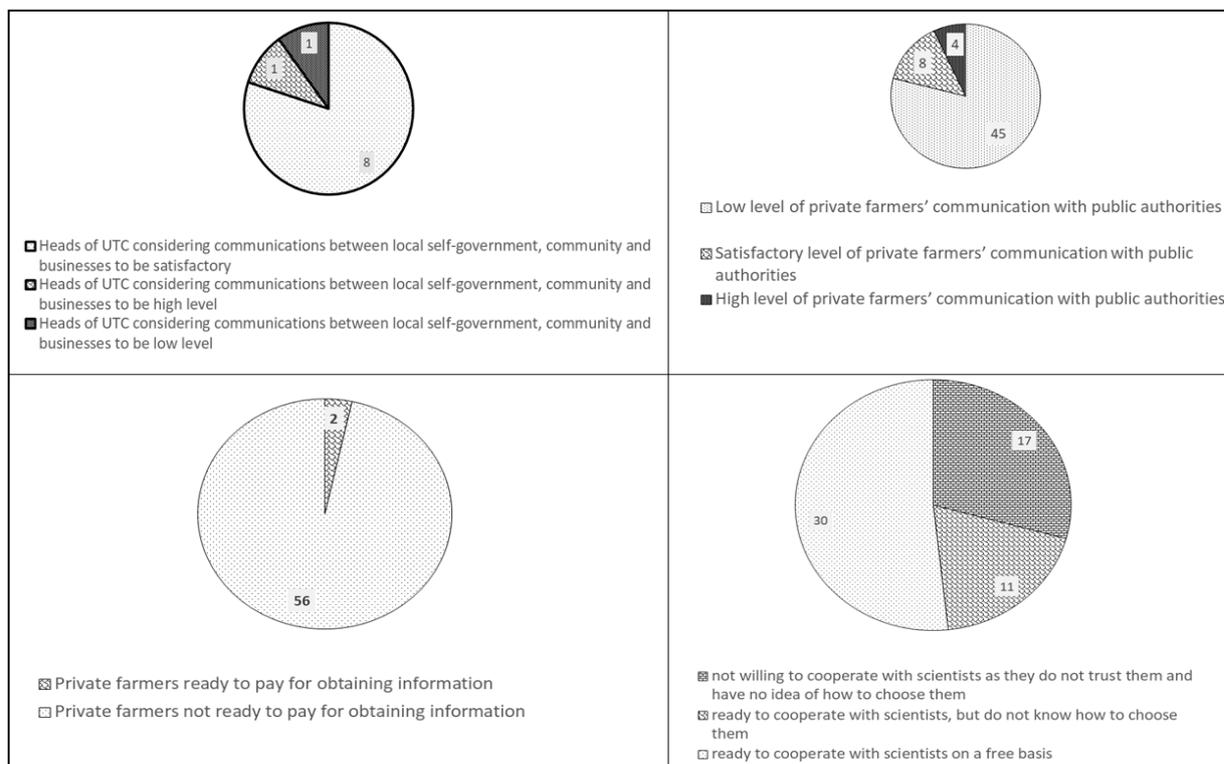


Figure 1. The results of survey. Source: own research.

Having analyzed the current situation, we can advise to hold master classes and webinars on effective communication between public authorities, agribusiness, community, scientists according to the scheme.

The survey conducted amongst private farmers (according to a multifactor questionnaire in which the answers for each

statement ranged from 0 - strongly disagree, to 4) on the most constraining factors in establishing communication between private farmers and public authorities found out that the most influential ones included distrust of public authorities, misunderstanding of communication processes and tools as well as a lack of desire to communicate, table 1.

Table 1. Factors constraining communications between private farmers and public authorities (0-minimum, 4-maximum; n = 58)

Category	Opinion of members	
	Mean	(SD)
communication	Incomprehension of interaction processes and instruments	3.29 (0.5)
	Distrust of public authority bodies	3.32 (0.44)
	No desire	2.14 (0.44)



1). Having analyzed the data obtained, we believe that establishing communications between public authorities, business, NGOs and the community currently must be prior in the community development agenda. In this regard, we consider it appropriate to create "Regional web platforms for public communications". Their activities should be aimed at ensuring rural people access to relevant information and at promoting social dialogue through developing and implementing appropriate strategies and plans in accordance with the goals and objectives set.

The activities of such platforms should be developed considering the needs and priorities identified at the local level of the community, business, agricultural producers, public organizations, united territorial communities. To ensure the community sustainable development and empowerment, the processes are implemented and monitored in close coordination with local stakeholders.

The state should support national research on sustainable development, using foresight, as one of the most modern methodologies for strategic forecasting of sustainable development to expand and institutionalize rural communication services as a part of the agricultural sector.

Conclusions. The issue of agriculture sustainable development maintenance under current conditions of information and communication technologies development is possible on condition of establishment of effective communications between the power, business, scientists and a society. Given the active spread of social networks, the emergence of new forms of population self-organization, including civic movements, unions, associations, the use of methodologies for forecasting future development and foresight opens new opportunities for sustainable development.

Statesupportforetablissementof"Regional web platforms for public communications" will contribute to ensuring access of rural residents to relevant information and social dialogue through the development and implementation of appropriate strategies and plans in accordance with the goals and objectives of sustainable development.

Large-scale information and consulting activities, as an organized exchange of information, should be implemented through the strengthening of communication links between public authorities, private farmers, community, academicians and other business entities as well as through government support programs.

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