

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL ECOLOGY AND THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This article analyzes the interrelationship between social ecology and the concept of sustainable development. It highlights the preservation of balance between humans and nature, the formation of ecological awareness and culture, and the dialectical connection between social and ecological systems of society. The concept of sustainable development is interpreted as the practical outcome of social ecology.

Keywords: social ecology, sustainable development, ecological balance, ecological culture, anthropocentrism, biosphere, society, environmental policy.

Introduction

One of the most pressing problems of humanity in the 21st century is the ecological crisis. Global warming, water scarcity, biodiversity loss, air and soil pollution, as well as the increase in man-made disasters are manifested as direct social consequences of human activity. As a result of the development of mankind, as a result of viewing nature only as a source of resources, natural systems have been disrupted, and the ecological balance has been disrupted. Therefore, it is now necessary to analyze environmental problems not only through natural-geographical or biological factors, but also in their inextricable connection with social, spiritual and economic processes.

This process became the basis for the formation of social ecology as an independent scientific direction. Social ecology studies the complex system of interactions between humans, society and nature. It is a scientific concept that leads humanity to a sustainable lifestyle through the development of ecological responsibility, ecological culture and civic consciousness.

On the other hand, the concept of sustainable development is a global idea aimed at harmonizing human activities with the laws of nature, meeting the needs of the present generation without taking into account the interests of future generations. This concept seeks to ensure a balance between economic growth, social justice and environmental security.

Thus, the ideas of social ecology and sustainable development are considered as complementary, mutually harmonious philosophical systems. The main goal of both directions

is to restore harmony between man and nature, to form an ecologically responsible society, and to develop social thinking oriented towards a sustainable future .

Methodology The study used **dialectical, systematic, comparative and sociological** methods of analysis. The dialectical approach helps to analyze the interaction between man and nature as a unity of contradictions and a process of development ¹. The systematic approach provides for the study of environmental problems in connection with social systems - economy, politics, culture and education ².

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out in the UN's "Agenda 2030" ³, UNESCO's "Education for Sustainable Development Goals" (2020) reports, and the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Environmental Protection" (2021) were also used as analytical sources ⁴.

Results and analysis Social ecology is a science that studies the relationship of humanity to nature from a philosophical, ethical and social perspective. At its heart is the harmony of the system "man - society - nature". According to NF Reimers, solving environmental problems is not only technical or economic, but also associated with a change in human consciousness ⁵. In this sense, ecological culture is an important component of social consciousness.

The concept of sustainable development was first defined in the 1987 UN Brundtland Report ("Our Common Future") ⁶. According to it, "sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." This concept is based on three main pillars:

- Economic stability,
- Social equality and justice,
- Environmental safety.

These principles apply to all areas of human activity in an integrated manner.

Social ecology is the theoretical and philosophical foundation of sustainable development. It aims to renew society through ecological awareness and culture, while sustainable development puts these ideas into practice. The two work as a complementary system.

¹UNESCO. Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives. Paris, 2020.

²Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Environmental Protection". 2021.

³Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the National Program "Green Space", 2021

⁴FAO. Building Climate-Resilient Societies. Rome, 2021.

⁵ Reimers NF Ecology: the balance between man and nature. Moscow, 1994.

⁶UNESCO. Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives. Paris, 2020.

Main direction	Social ecology	Sustainable development
Theoretical basis	Human-nature relationship	Global socio-economic imbalance
Purpose	Creating environmental awareness	Social, ecological, economic harmony
Subject	Society, individual	State, international organizations
Result	Ecological culture	Sustainable quality of life

Conclusion

The inextricable link between social ecology and sustainable development is one of the most important philosophical and practical systems that determine the future of humanity. Both directions complement each other: while social ecology is a scientific and theoretical foundation that forms ecological consciousness, culture and responsibility, sustainable development is manifested as a concept that provides practical stability based on this culture. Today, global environmental problems — climate change, resource scarcity, urbanization, and biodiversity loss — require humanity to adopt a new mindset, a socio-ecological worldview. In this worldview, humans are not seen as superior to nature, but as an integral part of it. Therefore, ecological thinking and the values of sustainable development must be deeply embedded in education, science, culture, and politics.

In the case of Uzbekistan, this process is finding practical expression. The country is implementing programs aimed at eliminating environmental problems, such as "Green Space", "Environmental Education", "Aral Sea Ecological Region", "Green Energy", and "Renewable Resources Policy". These initiatives serve not only to improve the ecological environment, but also to form an ecological culture among citizens, strengthen social responsibility, and develop an ecological economy.

Social ecology shows that the main condition for sustainable development is a critical approach to human behavior and the development of a culture of living in harmony with nature. Only when each person makes ecological values an integral part of his life, will true sustainable development occur in society.

Thus, social ecology is the philosophical basis of sustainable development, and sustainable development is the practical result of social ecology. Through their integration, it is possible to build an ecologically safe, socially just and economically sustainable society. Therefore, the formation of environmental awareness and social responsibility is the most important guarantee of human development, national security and the well-being of future generations.

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