
**IMPROVING THE EFFICIENCY OF MANAGEMENT AND ENSURING
THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TERRITORIES: STATE
REGULATION OF FOREST RESOURCES IN THE KOMI REPUBLIC
(RUSSIA)**

***MELHORANDO A EFICIÊNCIA DA GESTÃO E GARANTINDO O
DESENVOLVIMENTO SUSTENTÁVEL DOS TERRITÓRIOS:
REGULAMENTO ESTADUAL DOS RECURSOS FLORESTAIS NA
REPÚBLICA DE KOMI (RÚSSIA)***

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The article discusses some aspects of ensuring the efficient use of forest resources in the Far North and similar areas as exemplified by the Komi Republic using the innovative potential of small- and medium-sized businesses.

Methodology: The study uses a comprehensive program-targeted approach to developing mechanisms for managing the natural resource and infrastructure potential



of lagging and problem-plagued forest areas (on the example of forest villages of the Komi Republic) based on their strategic management as an integral system that has everything necessary for the effective functioning and advanced development of the region's economy.

Results: From the theoretical and methodological perspective, the authors of the article have substantiated and developed mechanisms for managing natural resource and infrastructure potential to ensure the socio-economic development of lagging and problem-plagued forest areas, as well as indicated the possibilities of using the obtained scientific results for their restoration and development.

Contribution: As the key factor in the more efficient use of forest resources, the authors have proposed a comprehensive program for the development of small- and medium-sized forestry businesses, with due regard to innovative and environmental approaches. The research data, conclusions, and proposals obtained elaborate some sections of economic theory and can serve as a theoretical basis for improving the territorial development management system.

Keywords: Theoretical and methodological foundations; Depressed forest areas; Natural resource potential; Infrastructure potential; Effective administration.

RESUMO

Objetivo: O artigo discute alguns aspectos para garantir o uso eficiente dos recursos florestais no Extremo Norte e áreas afins, como exemplificado pela República de Komi, usando o potencial inovador de pequenas e médias empresas.

Metodologia: O estudo usa uma abordagem abrangente direcionada ao programa para desenvolver mecanismos para gerenciar o recurso natural e o potencial de infraestrutura de áreas florestais atrasadas e atormentadas por problemas (no exemplo das aldeias florestais da República de Komi) com base em sua gestão estratégica como parte integrante sistema que tem tudo o que é necessário para o funcionamento eficaz e desenvolvimento avançado da economia da região.

Resultados: Do ponto de vista teórico e metodológico, os autores do artigo fundamentaram e desenvolveram mecanismos de gestão de recursos naturais e potencial de infraestrutura para garantir o desenvolvimento socioeconômico de áreas florestais atrasadas e problemáticas, bem como indicaram as possibilidades de uso os resultados científicos obtidos para sua restauração e desenvolvimento.

Contribuição: Como fator-chave para o uso mais eficiente dos recursos florestais, os autores propõem um programa abrangente para o desenvolvimento de pequenas e médias empresas florestais, com a devida atenção a abordagens inovadoras e



ambientais. Os dados da pesquisa, conclusões e propostas obtidas elaboram algumas seções da teoria econômica e podem servir como base teórica para melhorar o sistema de gestão do desenvolvimento territorial.

Palavras-chave: *Fundamentos teóricos e metodológicos; Áreas florestais deprimidas; Potencial de recursos naturais; Potencial de infraestrutura; Administração eficaz.*

1 INTRODUCTION

Currently, there is no sufficient research on the modern transformation of public administration with the effective use of natural resource and infrastructure potential, as well as its impact on stabilizing the reproduction processes of lagging and problem-plagued areas (for example, forest villages). This necessitates the further improvement of theoretical, methodological, organizational, and economic approaches to improving the mechanism for managing the use of natural resource and infrastructure potential to ensure rapid socio-economic development.

The fundamental scientific task of this study is to propose methodological foundations for building institutional models of state policy, as well as effective administration and management mechanisms for the rational use of natural resource and infrastructure potential of lagging and problem-plagued areas to ensure their advanced socio-economic development. The solution can be based on the proposed model of a depressed region, the concept of effective management (administration), and approaches to identifying the development potential of territories based on the analysis of their parameters.

It is also significant to analyze the applicability of decision support systems in terms of the current problem of developing regional centers and supporting their work with methods that improve the efficiency of decision-making by authorities in the field of forest resource use.

The need to form a mechanism for the socio-economic development of lagging and problem-plagued areas is conditioned, first of all, by the negative consequences of market reforms in Russia in the 1990s, which determined the mass closure of



resource-producing enterprises, including in the forest industry. As a result, a large part of its population fell below the poverty line. An increase in the volume of resource extraction (logging) does not always lead to the development of these territories, which is due to the disinterest of large private businesses in the development of small businesses, as well as the use of modern equipment and technologies that have replaced a significant number of workers, etc.

This is manifested by logging and forest settlements in the Komi Republic. The lack of a sound and consistent regional policy in the course of market transformations has led to a sharp differentiation in the development of certain municipalities and the emergence of lagging and problem-plagued areas, weakening the mechanism for managing the use of natural resource and infrastructure potential that ensures their socio-economic development.

Modern challenges in the management of depressed forest areas require the search for new diversification models.

One should understand that the natural resource potential of a territory is not a set of various elements (natural resources) but systemic integrity with a complex internal structure. Its amount characterizes not some individual parameters of the territorial ecosystem but the entire ecosystem (its ability to meet the needs of the local community).

Only this representation of the natural resource potential of a territory guarantees the adoption of systemic and integrated management decisions in various spheres of the region's life and implements the basic principles of sustainable development.

Unfortunately, Russian scholars adhere to a different opinion and believe that the natural resource potential of a territory is a component of its socio-economic potential, i.e. natural resources that are necessary to increase the volume of production of the local extractive industry. This viewpoint is the main theoretical premise for making managerial decisions in the field of nature management, both at the federal and regional levels. Such a theoretical delusion leads to non-compliance with such fundamental principles of any management process as consistency and complexity.



As a result, such managerial decisions are not optimal, on the contrary, irrational and often erroneous. The consequence is the inefficient management of socio-economic development, which naturally contributes to the growth of externalities.

2 LITERATURE OVERVIEW

Theoretical aspects of managing the development of depressed forest areas: The recent economic upturn in Russia was accompanied by growing territorial disproportions, both in the standard of living of the population and in the socio-economic development of constituent entities.

A steady trend has been the growing accumulation of the country's economic potential in a small number of regions with the most favorable conditions for economic growth. Today half of Russia's GRP is being created in Moscow, the Moscow region, Saint Petersburg, and the Tyumen region with autonomous areas. At the same time, many depressed territories remain underdeveloped at the present stage of Russia's development.

Foreign practice shows that such territories, if properly managed, can make a significant contribution to the overall development of the region and the state. It is necessary to find and scientifically substantiate modern approaches to the development of problem-plagued areas so that they begin to improve the economy of the region and the country, rather than acting as recipients.

Currently, much attention is paid to regional policy and the search for new mechanisms for the development of Russian regions. Their initiative to solve their problems through the fuller use of internal resources is especially encouraged. Accordingly, the administration of problem-plagued areas has additional incentives to actively participate in regional development, make effective decisions to create a more favorable business climate, bring them out of the crisis and improve the socio-economic situation. The regional situation centers that are being deployed should help



make such decisions. They are accompanied by information systems that can suggest decisions based on the use of new management mechanisms and data analysis.

There is uneven localization of production factors, i.e. they are concentrated in some territories and are lacking in others. Thus, it is expedient to consider the concept of depressed territories. Despite a good potential, these regions suffer from a steady decline in production, a higher unemployment rate (compared to the other constituent entities of the Russian Federation), a low degree of investment activity, and a relatively low fiscal capacity per capita.

In practice, scientific approaches are used that consider the development of depressed areas through exogenous management (financial and investment injection). There are also approaches based on expanding the methods of managerial influence and aimed at the economic activation and social self-organization of the internal potential of local communities.

The need to form a mechanism for the socio-economic development of depressed areas is mainly conditioned by the negative consequences of market reforms carried out in Russia in the 1990s. These resulted in the mass closure of resource-producing enterprises, including those in the forest industry.

Today an increase in the volume of resource extraction (logging) does not always lead to the development of these territories since large private businesses are not interested in the support of small businesses, as well as the use of modern equipment and technologies that have reduced a significant number of previously employed workers, etc.

This is clearly shown by the example of forest settlements in the Komi Republic. The lack of a sound and consistent regional policy in the course of market transformations has led to a sharp differentiation in the development of certain municipalities and the emergence of lagging and problem-plagued areas, which undermined the mechanism for managing the use of natural resource and infrastructure potential that ensures their socio-economic development.

Therefore, it is relevant to study the current problems and develop a mechanism for the integrated management of forest resources in depressed areas



using small- and medium-sized forestry businesses for ensuring the socio-economic development of Russia.

In the scientific and practical literature, there are various definitions of the concept of a depressed region. According to scholars, depressed regions are those that have passed the stage of economic recession or are going into recession. For example, depression is defined as a stage of development characterized by a decline in production compared to the previous period, growing unemployment, a decrease in investment and migration attractiveness, and an outflow of the population, i.e. depression precedes the stage of recession in the economy of a particular region.

Studies use several hypothetical models for managing a depressed area:

1. Based on the activation of predominantly economic potential;
2. Based on the balanced stabilization of economic and social potential;
3. Based on non-economic forms of supporting social potential through the system of social services (Morozova, Kozyreva, 2016).

Depending on the availability of resources (economic, natural and labor) and institutional conditions, one of the presented models or their combination is selected. At the same time, human and social capital becomes the most important factor in the development of a territory.

P.M. Mansurov and G.I. Mansurova (2012) considered the essence, attribution criteria, and main problems of developing depressed regions.

Along with natural and geopolitical factors, institutional factors differentiate Russian regions in terms of their economic development. They are associated with strong authorities and interest groups in the territory that can influence the formation of the institutional environment. When there is an imbalance towards rent-seeking interests, the institutional environment does not contribute to effective economic development.

The concept of sustainable development underlines the theoretical study of management strategies for the transformation of socio-economic systems. The key role of this concept in the economic theory and socio-economic development of



territories at the local, national, and transnational levels was substantiated by such scholars as L. Vardomskii (2019) and A. Treivish (1991).

One of the most popular research tools in relation to depressed territories is the institutional scientific approach that considers the socio-economic system as a set of rules and norms regulating relations (economic, social, political, cultural, etc.) between the parties to these relations.

Representatives of the modern Institutional School (North, 1997; Polterovich, 2006; Kleiner, 2004; Kirdina, 2014) develop new theoretical foundations and operational research systems to conduct an economic analysis of social development, considering not only economic but also socio-cultural, historical and psychological features.

The problems of peripheral regions in foreign countries, similar to northern Russia in terms of their geographical and natural resource potential, have been covered by representatives of the Center for Regional and Tourism Research in Denmark, the University of Eastern Finland – Joensuu, the University of Oulu and Kajaani University in Finland, the Umeå University in Sweden, and the University of Agder in Norway. The most significant scientific works are written by P. Billing and A. Cassimatis (2013) from Denmark, H. Eskelinen (2012) from Finland, J. Karlsen (2007) from Norway, etc.

V.N. Lazhentsev (2017) addressed problems connected with the development of northern Russia. The scholar highlighted that the key economic challenge is specific to each northern region. One socio-economic task in different regions is solved by different methods with due regard to the complex system of natural and economic conditions. Methods characterize the variety of activities that should be systematically organized. Real-life problems (an unsatisfactory state of something) are supplemented by the problem of organizing activities to solve them. The most common and difficult task is to combine the three principles of social development: economic efficiency, social justice, and environmental well-being. From the structural viewpoint, this can be done at the level of territories that have specific social forms of production, population settlement, natural complexes, and climate (Berdibekova et al., 2022).



The key economic problems of the North are associated with three types of economic systems:

– *The “supporting” economic complexes (nodes)* based on durable resources.

The things created within such nodes and with their help are subject to modernization: urban and rural settlements, housing and communal services, environmental protection, production, and infrastructure;

– *The industrial periphery* based on the development of natural resources and the maintenance of communications infrastructure. These are settlements of cyclical development, whose fading becomes inevitable over time unless another basis for the economy arises;

– *The rural periphery* (not only agricultural and forestry but also settlements characterized by a rural way of life).

The study of the North has determined the methodological necessity of combining the theory of territorial development, program-targeted planning, and the geographical and systemic approach to identifying and solving socio-economic problems. The geographical and systemic approach considers the natural environment, population, and production as interrelated phenomena within the framework of a single territorial economic complex.

The development of small business in northern Russia was studied by Doctor of Economics, Professor A.G. Shelomentsev (Kozlova et al., 2013). His papers emphasize the role of small businesses in the socio-economic development of the northern regions and reflect the specific problems of small businesses there. There are several recommendations for the northern regions with low employment.

L.V. Voronina (2017) considered the state policy in the field of entrepreneurship in northern Russia. The results of studying state support for entrepreneurship within the systematic approach are presented in the works of D. Storey (2013), R.A. Kildeeva (2004), and M.F. Shvedova (2012).

Thus, the study aims at considering the theoretical aspects of ensuring the efficient use of forest resources in the Far North and similar areas (as exemplified by the Komi Republic) and proposing mechanisms for managing natural resource and



infrastructure potential for the socio-economic development of lagging and problem-plagued forest territories.

3 METHODS

In the course of a theoretical study, it is necessary to improve the methodological foundations for managing natural resources and infrastructure potential of lagging and problem-plagued forest areas, to clarify the principles and criteria for advanced socio-economic development, to enhance practical recommendations for increasing the sustainability of economic development, to create conditions for using the potential of small- and medium-sized businesses, with due regard to innovative and environmentally responsible approaches.

The development of lagging and problem-plagued forest areas requires the effective use of their natural resource and infrastructure potential, new proposals for overcoming their depression, which will increase the gross national product and gross regional product, ensuring the advanced socio-economic development of the country and its regions.

To achieve this objective, we determined the following tasks:

- To identify the essence and manifestation of depressive territories, to substantiate the need to use theoretical, methodological, and practical approaches to the regulation of territorial development in modern conditions;
- To create a formalized model of a problem-plagued (depressed) region based on the structure and dynamics of indicators: the index of shipped goods of own production, work, and services performed; the ratio of the monetary income of the population to the subsistence minimum in the region, the unemployment rate and/or others;
- To reveal the essence and features of natural resource and infrastructure potential, organizational and managerial factors in the formation of a competitive



environment in the economy of the country and its constituent entities, as well as approaches to identifying the development potential of a particular forest area;

- To develop a formalized model of effective management (administration);
- To expose the existing problems of establishing and developing small- and medium-sized forestry businesses, creating competitive industries to use the potential of lagging and problem-plagued forest areas;
- To analyze negative organizational and managerial trends of the investment process in a problem-plagued (depressed) forest area;
- To substantiate strategic directions for the formation of an antidepressant organizational and economic mechanism;
- To describe the employment of the population in problem-plagued (depressed) forest areas as an organizational and managerial challenge;
- To assess the financial potential of forest areas and justify the need for investment to ensure their improvement and sustainable economic growth;
- To optimize financial flows of problem-plagued (depressed) forest areas for minimizing the cost of capital, increasing budgetary, social, and environmental efficiency;
- To form proposals for increasing the sustainability of the socio-economic development of lagging and problem-plagued areas (as exemplified by forest villages of the Komi Republic);
- To evaluate prerequisites for the coexistence of modern market production and traditional economy of the indigenous peoples of the North resistant to adverse natural and climatic conditions and poor transport accessibility;
- To test the proposed models, concepts, and approaches as exemplified by the logging regions of the Komi Republic, in particular, forest villages;
- To consider the applicability of the proposed approaches in decision-making information systems of regional situation centers.

It is important to use an integrated program-target approach to the development of a mechanism for managing the natural resource and infrastructure potential of lagging and problem-plagued forest areas based on the strategic



management of this potential as an integral system that has the necessary elements for the effective functioning and development of the economy.

The main scientific idea is to develop an effective mechanism for the state regulation of natural resource and infrastructure potential of lagging and problem-plagued forest areas (based on the example of forest villages of the Komi Republic), establish and support small- and medium-sized forestry businesses, as well as traditional occupations and crafts, with due regard to traditional methods, including cooperation, clustering, and cognition based on the use of modern approaches to modeling and data mining.

The development of a mechanism for effective state regulation involves the use of elements of effective corporate management based on data mining and modeling territorial problems and ways to solve them.

When setting the above-mentioned problem, it is necessary to develop theoretical and methodological foundations, models, and organizational and practical tools for the concept of economic recovery in lagging and problem-plagued forest areas based on strategic management.

4 RESULTS

First of all, we propose to use the institutions of consumer and industrial cooperation, the cluster- and project-based approach, more methods of managerial influence aimed at the economic activation and social self-organization of the internal potential of local communities, and consider the development of depressed areas through exogenous management (financial, investment infusion, etc.) in contrast to the approaches common to this subject area.

As a key factor in modeling the effective management of forest resources, it is proposed to develop a comprehensive program for supporting small- and medium-sized forestry businesses, with due regard to innovative and environmental



approaches, consistent with international principles of corporate governance, social and environmental responsibility, and sustainable development (Flores, Cruz, 2021).

To solve the problem, we described several directions for improving the state management of territories, namely, the systematic monitoring and analysis of data on the natural resource potential of lagging and problem-plagued forest areas to develop functional and managerial components of the mechanism for their growth and support (Livson et al., 2021).

We specify the theory of management in relation to lagging and problem-plagued forest areas aimed at restoring and developing the country's economy, adapted to market conditions with limited state influence on the interconnected economic spheres: socio-economic, agricultural, industrial, recreational, ecological, etc. It is necessary to plan the development of problem-plagued forest areas and their effective management using elements of innovative and environmentally responsible small and medium-sized forestry entrepreneurship.

It is also proposed to form a concept of recreational and environmental support for lagging and problem-plagued forest areas, including effective socio-economic transformations as a necessary condition for overall development. This concept will improve the functioning of the interconnected system: nature-person-economy.

It is necessary to develop an effective mechanism for managing the natural resource and infrastructure potential of lagging and problematic forest areas (for example, forest villages of the Komi Republic) based on the creation and development of small- and medium-sized forestry businesses, traditional occupations and trades, taking into account modern and traditional approaches.

The development of methodology and research tools allows for obtaining several scientific and practical results that are relevant for public administration, including:

- The multidimensional classification of lagging and problem-plagued (depressed) territories, differing in the state of social and economic potential;
- Directions of managerial influence in accordance with each of the identified types: the activation of economic potential; the balanced stabilization of economic and



social potential; non-economic forms of supporting social potential through the system of social services;

- Institutional models for the development of depressed areas: the construction of legitimate social mechanisms (the development of human capital, social integration, social cooperation, the growth of social networks, participatory management);

- Conceptual approaches to the integration of institutional development planning at the territorial level;

- Methodological recommendations for determining the integral synthetic (latent) indicator of the socio-economic development of some territory and its use in the implementation of state and municipal financial policy;

- Methodology for building local institutions focused on developing lagging and problem-plagued (depressed) territories (including institutional support for economic clusters);

- Methodological and technological recommendations for applying the proposed approaches in decision-making information systems.

An assessment of the financial potential of forest areas helped to determine the optimal amount of state financial support for lagging and problematic areas, which will become a driver for their growth and reaching the indicators of sustainable socio-economic growth and development.

State and municipal authorities conducted objective assessments of the budgetary, social, and environmental efficiency of projects that can be implemented in the selected municipalities, while private investment companies evaluated the cost of invested capital.

Despite the fundamental theoretical problems of the institutional development of lagging and problem-plagued areas, the state regulation and support of small- and medium-sized businesses, and the sustainable socio-economic development of regions, there is a need for further study of theoretical and methodological problems of managing natural resource and infrastructure potential to ensure the evolution of



such forest areas through innovative and environmentally responsible small- and medium-sized businesses.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Under the current conditions, the state management of natural resource and infrastructure potential ensuring the efficient use of forest resources in the Far North and similar areas is a necessary element of the economic mechanism for the functioning of the real sector of the economy for sustainable positive socio-economic dynamics and integration processes. This requires a theoretical understanding of objective conditions for managing the use of natural resource and infrastructure potential, analyzing its current state, and assessing the degree of its compliance with the needs of the country's socio-economic development at this stage and in the future through modern data analysis technologies, territory models and effective management (administration).

The public administration system using the natural resource and infrastructure potential should consolidate resources and coordinate the interests of all parties to the state-business-society reproduction process.

The scientific significance of this study lies in the theoretical and methodological substantiation and development of models and mechanisms for managing natural resource and infrastructure potential to ensure the socio-economic development of lagging and problem-plagued forest areas and the possibilities of using its results for restoration and development. The research data, conclusions, and proposals obtained elaborate some sections of economic theory and can serve as a theoretical basis for improving the territorial development management system.

This article is relevant as it forms specific provisions and recommendations that improve the socio-economic development of lagging and problem-plagued forest areas.



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