

# Green Transformation in the Context of Sustainable Development

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**Abstract.** The current trends in the development of international relations and the national characteristics of Russia, its competitive advantages, as well as the challenges it faces internally and externally, require the development and implementation of a new domestic and foreign policy in the field of nature protection, its transformation into one from national and foreign policy priorities. Preservation and conservation of nature should become an important component of the Russian national idea, its mission for itself and for the world, an important element of Russian international identity, and international cooperation in nature protection should become an important positive contribution of Russia to the development of the world, a component of its international attractiveness and authority.

## 1 Introduction

Nature protection should also become one of the priority areas of Russia's foreign policy, an important part of the agenda of both Russia's bilateral dialogues with key partners, primarily China and the EU, and multilateral institutions with Russian participation (BRICS, SCO, RIC, EAEU). Today, due to disagreements between member countries, environmental and climate issues are not among the highest priorities within the framework of BRICS, RIC and SCO. However, it is desirable for Russia to show leadership in this matter and to help gradually overcome differences and fill this gap, starting with a dialogue through an expert line [1]. Moreover, we should first of all not talk about short-term obligations of member states in the environmental sphere, but about joint development with Russia of a new global agenda in the field of nature protection, more fair than the one proposed today by the West, and emphasizing the positive contribution of Russia to the solution of world environmental and climate problems [2]. This agenda should be focused not only and not so much on climate change issues, but on cooperation in the fight against the whole range of environmental problems, the joint development of cleaner industries.

It is necessary to promote at the global level the idea that the global restructuring of the world economy, necessary to solve the world's environmental problems, should be inclusive and aligned. Accordingly, it is necessary to move towards "clean" development

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through joint efforts, the adoption of a “Global / global green course”. It is necessary to develop such rules and instruments of international economic relations and global governance that would emphasize the responsibility for environmental pollution of both producers and consumers of “dirty” products, and would provide real assistance to rich developed countries for the transition of all countries of the world towards a more low-carbon green economy. In particular, the goal should be to create a global green financing system that will link the financial resources available to rich countries for low-carbon development financing with low-cost emission reduction projects located mainly in developing countries.

Environmental problems are turning into one of the top-priority issues of international relations - along with international security and economic development[1]. Even if this ambitious initiative is not fully embodied in the proclaimed parameters, it is seen as a way both to get the EU out of the current economic crisis and to strengthen the EU’s competitive position for the foreseeable future. In the United States, the Joseph Biden administration considers climate issues as one of the main domestic and foreign policy priorities, and the acquisition of the United States leadership on the climate agenda is an important way to restore American “global leadership” as a whole. Probably, already at the beginning of the Biden presidency, the goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 will be announced. In recent years, China has also begun to play an important role in the global environmental and climate agenda and has announced its intention to move towards carbon neutrality by 2060 [3]. Issues of protecting the environment and combating climate change occupy an important place in the work of key institutions of global governance, including the G20 and BRICS.

The increasing importance of environmental issues is due to a number of factors [4]:

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The increasing importance of environmental issues on the international agenda is due to a number of factors [7]:

- an objective aggravation of environmental problems and an increase in the negative impact of nature degradation on the health and quality of life of the population around the world. Given the reduction in the cost of clean technologies, the benefits derived from an extensive model of development, exploitation of nature and dirty industries are gradually becoming smaller compared to the burden that falls on health care, social security, insurance, and quality people’s lives. Ecology has fully become a problem of national and international security [6];

- the merging in the competitiveness of companies and countries;

- the conservation of nature could become a new universal ideology of mankind, capable of filling the vacuum that has formed as a result of the crisis of neoliberalism that is evident today and the absence of such powerful alternatives as, in particular, socialism was [7].

## 2 Research Methodology

Environmental cooperation remains the most important element of the interaction of the member countries of the Arctic Council, despite the fact that relations between Russia and most of its other members are characterized by alienation, if not confrontation [10].

Against the backdrop of the new global economic crisis spurred on by the COVID-19 pandemic, many advanced countries of the world (both developed and developing - India is essentially the only exception among the leading countries) consider the “green” agenda as an anti-crisis policy tool - a way to make a breakthrough in terms of technological modernization and structural transformation of the economy and thereby increase their own competitiveness at the exit from the crisis and in the period after [12].

Considering the increasing topicality of environmental problems for the vast majority of countries in the world in connection with the above factors, there is a need to form a truly unifying, and not divisive, non-discriminatory environmental and climate agenda that would stimulate the global movement to reduce to reduce environmental damage and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, rather than form a narrow circle of privileged countries with a minimal effect on climate change. Russia, with its richest natural potential and position as an environmental donor to the planet, could become the initiator of such an agenda.

## 3 Results and Discussions

The Western-led approach to combating environmental problems, with a particular focus on climate change, effectively places the responsibility for it on countries producing “dirty” products. Such an approach, which is objectively unfavorable for Russia, is one-sided, fraught with the perpetuation of new global economic discrimination and is ineffective in combating global climate change. However, at the official level, Moscow does not try to offer any alternative [8,9]. Even when Russia criticizes certain steps from time to time, such as the intention of the European Union to introduce carbon border regulation, it does not try at the official intergovernmental level to offer any other options for action to the European Union itself (in this matter, the state lags behind the business that is trying to carry out such work) , nor develop, together with partners in the BRICS and SCO, a constructive alternative, putting it forward at the global level. Given that such an alternative could receive the support of many developing countries, would strengthen Russia’s international influence and would not only allow it to avoid large losses, which are fraught with the implementation of the current agenda promoted by the EU and eventually the United States, but would also bring significant economic benefit.

Passivity characterizes Russia’s approach to the environmental and climate agenda both in relations with its partners in the BRICS and SCO, and in relations with Western countries. Within the framework of the BRICS and SCO, Moscow does not consider this issue as one of the priorities, which is clearly evidenced by the Russian presidency in 2020 [10]. And the point here is not only the coronavirus pandemic, which changed the agenda of both structures, especially the BRICS: these issues were not initially listed among the official Russian priorities. While the implementation of the “European Green Deal” threatens Russia with serious economic losses due to border carbon regulation and fixing the image of a “lagging behind” in the fight against climate change, Moscow takes a critical and waiting position on this issue. . Countervailing duties from both Russia and other countries may become another front of trade wars, unfavorable for the EU as well. European partners should be aware of this.

Russian business is already expressing concern about future losses and loss of markets and emphasizes that this problem can be solved only at the level of official relations on a bilateral (Russia-EU) or multilateral track [11]. Insufficient technological renewal of the extractive industries and refusal to correct the structural distortions of the Russian economy, including through the development of “green” industries, are fraught with a long-term lag of the country from the main economic trends, similar to the lag of the USSR in the field of cybernetics in the 1970s-1980s years.

Russia has already missed a lot of time in terms of the development of low-carbon industries, reacting to “green” global trends too slowly [12].

Due to the peculiarities of the Russian territory, nature and economic specialization, Russia’s potential weight in environmental issues is much higher than its weight in the global economy. The country is able to make a huge contribution to solving global environmental problems (for its own benefit) [15].

Proximity to nature and its conservation should be positioned as an important part of Russia’s national identity. This will not only mitigate or eliminate the risks but will also bring the country many opportunities that have not yet been used, political influence and economic benefits [14]:

- to give a new meaning to national development, to give the Russian society and elites an attractive and future-oriented idea, to create a new consolidating national agenda that unites both liberals and statesmen, and the country as a whole - a promising mission for itself and for the world;
- strengthen the authority primarily among developing countries, but also among some Western countries, emphasize the positive contribution to world development and strengthen positions in the emerging process of forming a new international order, as well as derive economic benefits from cooperation with others conservation countries;
- and, of course, contribute to the conservation and development of the country’s natural potential. And he is one of the most important foundations of patriotism, readiness to work for the country and people.

## 4 Conclusions

Russia’s proposed turn to nature is overdue - this is felt by a significant part of the intellectual elite and civil society, this understanding is increasingly spreading among business and political elites. In the last few years, several important analytical reports on environmental topics have been published. Environment and climate issues are actively discussed at meetings of business associations, among government representatives. Individual companies see new market niches for themselves, opening up in connection with the “green” transformation of the global economy [12].

We believe (although not all participants in the sit-analysis agreed with these recommendations) that one should strive to limit the overconsumption of the wealthy and introduce payment for the damage caused to nature by those who consume excessively, including using elements of progressive taxation.

Russia needs a new philosophy of saving people, which puts spiritual development, health, safety and well-being at the forefront, and not just the volume of material consumption. Environmental conservation should become one of the central elements of the new national idea and priorities of state policy in all areas.

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