

**THE USE OF ECONOMIC AND OTHER STATISTICAL
DATA FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.
INTEGRATION OF ECOLOGICAL NEEDS IN THE
SYSTEM OF ECONOMIC AND OTHER STATISTICS**

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1. During the past ten years everyone speaks about the actuality and importance of environmental protection. This goal has united the peoples of all continents irrespective of racial and religious belonging or political views and has gained a character of global importance. The state of the environment is studied by many sciences, including the statistical science. As a rule, the ecological problems are studied with the help of different statistical data from various branches of economic statistics, social statistics, and environmental statistics. Environmental statistics is directly concerned with all questions, related to environmental protection and rational use of natural resources such as water, soil, forest, air, and etc.

2. Today there are other opportunities to study various aspects, connected directly or indirectly to nature protection through:

- the use of other branches of statistics with the purposes of environmental protection- economic, social statistical sciences;
- the integration of ecological needs into the systems of other statistics, for example, use of different methods of observation.

It is necessary to use these opportunities to expand and to deepen research into these problems, indicating links between the reasons and consequences of the existing situation. Besides, this will allow expenses to be reduced for development and realisation of various statistical research methods. The Statistical Office of Moldova has begun to solve some of these questions.

3. In January 1999, the statisticians developed a questionnaire to be used for heads of small and middle-size enterprises. It contained a list of questions, allowing to know the opinion of the businessmen regarding several current socio-economical questions. The questionnaire was an annex to the Annual Statistical Questionnaire on the financial and economic activity of enterprises during a given year. About 8 thousands questionnaires were disseminated to small and middle-size enterprises.

The following were covered in the questionnaire:

- the fiscal policy system
- the economic stability and security of the enterprise's activity
- the attitude towards the introduction of medical insurance
- perspectives for development of private business
- confidence in the future, and
- attitudes towards existing ecological taxes and their influence on environmental

protection.

The results of this research will be available in October 1999 and it will determine the ecological fiscal policy in Moldova.

4. Another example is the use of data from the sociological survey of members of households for defining the place of environmental problems among the most urgent social problems in society. This information was collected during the current Household Budget Survey that was conducted by the statistical agency in November 1998. The questionnaire required people to identify and rank the top social problems. In total 1072 persons from various regions of the republic were interviewed. Among them 59% were inhabitants of rural areas. The structure by gender and age of the interviewed persons was as follows:

52% women and 48% men
26% persons of 16-29 years of age
20% accordingly from 30-39 years of age
23% from 40-49 years of age
13% from 50-59 years of age
18% from 60 years and more

5. The ecological problems occupied the eighth place among ten social problems which were specified, such as low payment of labour, debt on payment of wages and pensions, increase of prices, problems in the field of public health services, education, growth of criminality. This is cause of concern, particularly since during the sociological interview of the population of Moldova conducted in 1991, the unfavourable ecological situation was not mentioned among the ten top main problems by the interviewed persons.

6. The study and estimation of pollution levels based on cases of households as a sector of economy has till now been disregarded by statistics. For this purpose it is possible to use the Household Budget Survey which will be carried out by the statistical agency with the purpose to studying and estimate the living standard of the population of republic. The experience of the countries in which this issue has been studied would be interesting.