

Complex research on factors of sustainable rural development

Uma pesquisa de fatores de desenvolvimento sustentável de territórios rurais

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Abstract

The profile and specialization of rural territories in Russia transformed for the last 20 years. The reason for this is the changed overall economic situation and the relatively bright period of investment and innovation development during 2000-2014. The article explores the problems of self-identification of rural territories in the current socio-economic environment. An extensive theoretical review of functions implemented by the rural territories should provide new theoretical definitions and devise an analytical approach to identifying the development level of rural territories.

key words: rural territories, sustainable development, functions, agricultural region

Resumen

O perfil e a especialização de territórios rurais em Portugal múltiplos transformado nos últimos 20 anos. A razão para isso – изменившаяся total condições econômicas e de um período relativamente próspera de investimento em inovação e desenvolvimento em 2000-2014 rr. Este artigo aborda um problema de identidade de territórios rurais nas atuais condições sócio-econômicas. Uma extensa revisão teórica implementada territórios rurais funções permitem a formação de novas teórico definição e desenvolver a abordagem analítica de identificação do nível de desenvolvimento de territórios rurais.

Palabras clave: os espaços rurais, desenvolvimento sustentável, recursos, agrícola da região

1. Introduction

In a changing economic environment, rural territories are forced to be in a constant search for a balance between homeostasis and adaptation. In maintaining the homeostatic position (constancy) without considering innovations rural territories are progressively archaic with strengthening socio-economic gradients in

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comparison with advanced suburban and urban areas. Following the path of adaptation, rural territories choose the option of gradual "integration" into the post-agroindustrial economy and reformatting their morphological characteristics and specific properties. Following the post-agroindustrial paradigm of economic development prioritizing knowledge, innovative technologies and business solutions as the main factors for the production of intangible nature, rural territories, however, lose their identity and local recognition, observance, preservation, and even conservation of the way of life, rural lifestyle and farming traditions. This is the problem of finding the optimal correlation of homeostasis and adaptation in the multi-functional development of the rural continuum.

To understand the essential aspects regarding the development multi-functionality of rural territories, it is necessary to consider the modern semantic content of scientific terms "rural territories" and "sustainable development". It is also vital to provide a classification of all the different functions performed to streamline a retrospective knowledge in this subject area.

Ironically, the system-building role and macroeconomic significance of rural territories both face the lack of uniform approaches to their interpretation and the essential certainty. In domestic practice, rural territories are rural settlements and inter-village areas related to agriculture, forestry, fish farming or hunting and other commercial activities. That is, the administrative and sectorial branch approach seems obvious. At the same time, not all rural territories are associated with the listed economic activities. This assumption needs to be verified by reviewing scientific works on the research subject.

1.1. Theoretical aspects of defining "rural territories" in Russian practice

The continental European model of the territorial social organization considers rural territories as the ones outside the administrative boundaries of cities without reference to their sectorial orientation. Several Russian specialists share this opinion. Indeed, the rural type of territory should be inherently defined not only by administrative and industrial affiliation, but also by the spatial and functional characteristics determining its position in the system of the territorial arrangement. This is suggested, in particular, by A.N. Tarasov and N.I. Antonova (Tarasov & Antonova, 2016). They consider rural territories to be the "out-of-cities" localities populated by people from various economic spheres and accumulated the variety of natural resources serving to ensure the food and territorial security of the country.

In Russian practice, rural territories are considered according to two ideological positions: the one based on industrial load with localizing in its base of agricultural sectors and the one based on special territorial continuum having its own properties, unique socio-economic, cultural and ethical characteristics, etc. In this context, we will provide the results of retrospective studies on defining the essence of rural territories.

D.A. Balandin recognizes rural territories as the authentic area inhabited by rural population with its natural and climatic conditions and resources enabling agricultural production to resolve economic, social, environmental, and institutional challenges (Balandin, 2013).

As rural territories, O.V. Shumakova implies "a complex socio-economic areal for presence and activities of the rural community, which localized outside the urbanized spaces including settlements and inter-village zones with infrastructure and a surrounding natural ecoscape" (Shumakova & Rabkanova, 2014). Similar opinions were adopted by D.V. Menyaikin and A.O. Talanova (Menyaikin & Talanova, 2016) .

S.A. Kovalev equates rural areas with "inhabited terrain outside cities with its natural resources and conditions, population and the materialized fruits of people's labor - elements of material culture and main productive assets" (Kovalev, 1980).

According to V.M. Bautina, the rural territory is "a terrestrial space outside urban areas inhabited by people with a commonality of natural, historical and other features" (Bautin & Kozlov, 2015).

Administrative and management approach is apparent for V.M. Starchenko, who recognized rural territories as "rural settlements and economic entities localized within the geographical boundaries of local self-government bodies - rural administrations" (Starchenko, 2009).

I.N. Merenkova and V.N. Pertsev point to the interrelation of rural territories as "the most important part of the macroeconomic complex of the country including the inhabited area outside the cities and suburbs with its conditions and resources, inhabited and utilized by people" (Merenkova & Pertsev, 2011).

A similar aggregated opinion was shared by A.P. Ogarkov, I.Sh. Magomedov and A.V. Merzlov. According to them, rural territories are:

- the area outside cities and suburbs
- with unique resource, natural and climatic determinants
- the zone densely populated by rural people engaged in agricultural (non-industrial) production and associated economic activities
- the territories within the boundaries of municipal settlements and inter-village areas (Ogarkov, 2002) (Magomedov, 2011) (Merzlov, 2006).

The review of the scientific research results confirms our assumption that modern rural territories in Russian practice are considered through the lens of administrative-territorial and sectorial approaches. In our opinion, it requires a broader interpretation, i.e. from the standpoint of the functional approach. In this context and given the subject and focus of our research, we will formulate the author's concept of rural territories based on the introduction of their defining characteristics – their multi-functional nature. Modern rural territories are the formed socio-cultural continuum of the population that lives within the boundaries of rural municipalities and leads activities determined by natural and resource characteristics as well as the economic and geographical situation. It also has separate self-government bodies aimed at solving local issues for achieving the fullest capacity of the territory, improving the social and economic situation of the population and implementing the widest possible range of socially significant functions.

1.2. Essentials of sustainable development of rural territories

Analyzing the types and nature of rural development, we note that scientific literature mainly focuses on sustainable development. Since the late 1980s, the concept of sustainable development is the focus of the attention of scientists and politicians in our country and abroad. The term "sustainable development" was first used regarding environment protection. In 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro officially proclaimed the need to ensure a balanced solution to socio-economic challenges and problems of preservation of a healthy environment, natural resources in meeting the needs of present and future generations. Some authors not edits conceptual contradiction. Its constituent terms are mutually exclusive as stability implies immobility, a permanence of the position i.e. statics in contrast to the dynamic essence of the term "development" denoting qualitative change, the transition from lower to higher.

Indeed, the essence of sustainable development is first and foremost the development of society and the individual without irreversible damage to the natural environment. There is a certain confusion regarding the definition of sustainability from the standpoint of mankind survival and sustainability from the standpoint of

ensuring positive dynamics in uneven socio-economic and technological development that is due to transliteration specifics.

In the generalized version, sustainable development is a kind of development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs, as pointed out by A.A. Stepanova (Stepanova, 2011).

Today, entire states and small local communities are directly or indirectly following the path of sustainable development based on the apt remark that "sustainable human life on Earth is impossible without the resilience of local communities", which include rural territories and their socio-economic continuum.

While evaluating the application of the provisions from the sustainable development theory to the functioning specifics of domestic rural territories, we note that there is no universal concept of "sustainable development of rural territories" formed in the fundamental research to date.

Reflection of researchers focuses on two directions:

- sustainable development itself that considers mainly environmental aspects according to the term "sustainable –enduring, withstanding";
- rural development connected to the social nature and complexity of rural areas according to the term "rural – country, province".

There is a first interpretation of "sustainable development of rural territories" in the Russian enforcement practices, namely in Federal law of 29 December 2006, No. 294-F3 "On the development of agriculture" that considers it as the stable socio-economic development, increasing the efficiency of agriculture and the volume of agricultural production, achieving full employment of the rural population and improving its living standards, as well as a rational use of land (Assembly of the legislation of the Russian Federation, 2007). The same document ascribes the development of villages to the priorities of the state agro-food policy and state support for the agricultural sphere.

Currently, the discussion is about justifying the need to consolidate norms of rural development into a single basic normative act of a doctrinal nature. Thus, A.A. Afanasiev believes that "today's norms of basic federal laws do not fully take into account the peculiarities and tasks of the priority direction of State policy on rural development (Afanasiev, 2014). Each sphere of activity in rural settlements is regulated by separate state normative acts, i.e. federal laws, laws of constituent entities of the Russian Federation and according to the legislation basis –normative legal acts of local self-government bodies".

However, there are opposing opinions. E.L. Minina thinks that the Russian legislation system formed and "pulling out" norms related to the development of rural territories from the scope of its branches for uniting into a new law may not be fully justified (Minina, 2009). The starting point is to identify necessary mechanisms for sustainable development of rural territories that are absent in the current legislation. Then there is a need to determine whether the proposed legal material will be sufficient for the development of a new legal act or making amendments and additions to the existing acts will be enough. Concrete measures to provide the State support for the sustainable development of rural territories (creating additional employments, increased payments to families, arranging gas supply and road construction in rural areas, etc.) is necessary to implement within the framework of the federal targeted program designed for a certain period unlike the law of unlimited duration containing mandatory norms of behavior.

Modern balanced socio-economic and fiscal policy on the development of rural territories is based on the following principles defining its essence and focus:

1. development of rural areas as a single territorial complex carrying out environmental, socio-demographic, cultural, productive and economic, recreational, and other functions;
2. giving priority to ensuring the constitutional rights of rural citizens to work, access to quality education, medical care and other social services;
3. provision of State support to rural territories and settlements to ensure the rational use and development of their natural and socio-demographic capacity;
4. compliance of partnership between regional authorities and local self-government bodies, business and rural population for sustainable rural development;
5. taking into consideration territorial peculiarities in supporting for depressed rural settlements;
6. broadening and deepening integration and cooperation between the village with the city, adapting settlements into the unified economic system of the region based on the development of traffic and transport infrastructure, modern communication tools and establishing unified systems of social services for the population;
7. harnessing development capacity of all rural settlements with the allocation of inter-settlement service centers;
8. development of local self-government in the settlement, all forms of cooperation, enhancing the local population participation in decision-making linked to the development prospects of rural settlements.

2. Methodology

The main objective of the research is to analyze the socio-economic development of rural territories followed by identifying the functional characteristics of the regional environment, as well as identification of distortion and imbalances of the implemented functions.

For effective management and eliminating gaps in rural development, it is advisable to use adaptive tools developed specifically for a particular region. As the object of the research, we selected rural territories of the Krasnodar region. To allocate rural territories within the regional borders we used D.S. Kleimenov's approach to divide the entire territory of the Krasnodar region into municipal units with a homogeneous and heterogeneous territory.

Thus, table 1 demonstrates the grouping of municipal units by the level of the composition homogeneity. In a separate group, we allocated municipal districts of the Krasnodar region that include only rural settlements on the date of research.

So, we outlined a circle of analyzed districts. It is structurally homogeneous without urban areas generating network effects on nearby rural territories.

Comparing the data on homogeneous rural territories, the following details should be taken into account:

- the research period must be the same for all the objects under analysis;
- the evaluation is carried out according to the selected array of indicators for all the objects;
- the units of measurement must be the same for all the research objects.

Table 1
Distribution of municipal units of Krasnodar region by type of administrative structure

Municipal unit		
Urban district	Municipal areas with urban territories	Municipal areas with rural territories
Krasnodar city	Abinsky district	Beloglinsky district
Resort city Anapa	Apsheronsky district	Bryukhovetsky district
Armavir city	Belorechensky district	Vyselkovsky district
Resort city Gelendzhik	Gulkevichsky district	Dinskoy district
GoryachyKlyuch city	Yeysky district	Kalininsky district
Resort city Novorossiysk	Caucasian district	Kanevskoy district
Resort city Sochi	Korenovsky district	Krasnoarmeysky district
	Krymsky district	Krylovsky district
	Kurganinsky district	Kushchevsky district
	Labinsky district	Leningradsky district
	Novokubansky district	
	Primorsko-Akhtarsky district	Novopokovsky district
	Slavyansky district	Otradnensky district
	Temryuksky district	Pavlovsky district
	Timashevsky district	
	Tikhoretsky district	Starominsky district
	Tuapsinsky district	Tbilissky district
	Ust-Labinsky district	Uspensky district
	Mostovsky district	Shcherbinovsky district
	Seversky district	

Intra-regional imbalances influence complex parameters of the regional socio-economic development changing and distorting the competitive picture of the territory. In this regard, there is a goal to form methodological support to identify mentioned problem blocks that will enable further adaptation and creating tools to reduce intraregional imbalances.

Among the tasks of the research, the imbalance identification in the functional component of the socio-economic environment of rural territories is of particular importance. Focusing on the multi-functional nature of such territories, it is necessary to take into account the aetiology specifics of connections as social effects in the rural environment often produce economic growth or recession. For urban areas, economic fluctuations, by contrast, provoke social disturbances. These differences play a significant role in the development of a methodological approach for measuring the degree of balance in implementing socio-economic functions by rural territories.

In this regard, we formed the author's methodological approach "REGION-analysis", which includes several stages of the imbalance assessment.

During the first stage, we defined estimation parameters and selected the array of indicators related to each parameter. The parameters correspond to the functionality of rural territories in the regional environment. Table 2 shows the analytical sub-blocks and the composition of indicators for assessing the realization level of social functions of the rural territories in the Krasnodar region. The abbreviation interpretation corresponds to the certain block of research, which will enable identifying the heterogeneity of rural territories.

Table 2
Interpreting components and indicators of REGION-analysis

Abbreviation	Blocks and indicators
R (revenue - State income, finance, investments)	"Finance" sub-block (municipal budget and investments): Local budget revenues, actually implemented, thousand rubles; Local-budget expenditure, actually implemented, thousand rubles; Investments in fixed capital at the expense of the municipal budget, thousand rubles; Investments in fixed capital at the expense of the municipal budget, thousand rubles; Investments in fixed capital by organizations located on the municipality territory (without small business entities), thousand rubles.
E (employment, work)	Employment sub-block: Average number of employees in organizations, person; Wage fund of all organization employees, thousand rubles.
G (geo - Earth)	Environmental sub-block. Spatial characteristics: Number of settlements, units; Length of public estate motor roads owned by municipalities, kilometers; Number of rural settlements with postal services, units; Total area of land covered by municipality, hectares.
I (industry – production, entrepreneurship)	"Entrepreneurship" sub-block: Shipped goods of their own production, provided works and services internally (without small business entities), thousand rubles; Retail trade turnover (without small business entities), thousand rubles; Agricultural production output (at then-current prices), thousand rubles;
O (object)	Infrastructural sub-block (social objects, housing and public services): Number of institutions of cultural and leisure type, units; Number of centers for social services for elderly citizens and persons with disabilities, units; Number of medical and preventive organizations, units; Number of general education organizations(at the beginning of the academic year), units; Total area of housing facilities, thousand square meters; Single stretch of street water supply network, meters; Number of heat supply sources, units.
N (nation - population)	Demographic sub-block 1) Population assessment on 1st January of current year, person; 2) Number of births (without stillborn), person; 3) Number of arrivals, person.

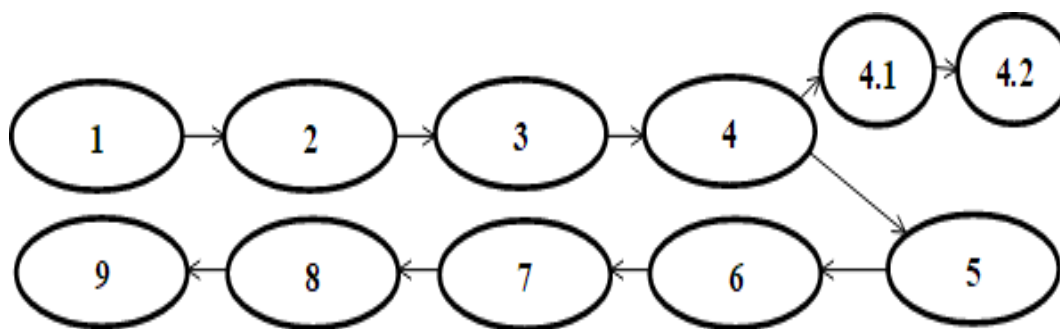
At the next stage, we made a sampling of statistics for 2017 from the Statistical Base of Municipalities of the Krasnodar region. To bring the data to a general basis, we made the calculation of weights for all groups of the analyzed indicators in terms of economic and social functions. The method of weighting is used when it is necessary to evaluate the importance of a certain criterion compared to the aggregate value.

This approach was introduced by S.V.Emelyanov and O. I. Larichev (Emelyanov & Larichev, 1985). The indicator utility criterion is defined by the sum of the weightings (weight coefficients) of the criteria. At that, the sum of the weightings must be equal to one.

This method will identify imbalances of the rural territories then apply the necessary incentive and development tools taking into account the analyzed characteristics.

Thus, the subsequent involvement of rural territories into socio-economic projects should consider their weak and strong points as well as apply an adaptive approach to the implemented activities. The methodology of "REGION-analysis" in its final form is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Graph of actions on measuring a balance degree of implementing functions by rural territories according to the author's "REGION-analysis"



Note: 1 – Allocation of homogeneous rural districts(the method by D.S. Kleimenova) (Kleymenov, 2016); 2 – justification of analytical areas corresponding to each semantic unit of "REGION-analysis" and the creation of separate indicators for their quantitative analysis; 3 – a collection of initial information from the official State statistical unit; 4 – implementation of quantitative evaluation using the method of weightings;4.1 – calculation of balance coefficient for social functions in each rural area; 4.2 – calculation of balance coefficient for economic functions in each rural area; 5 – formation of questionnaires and panels for expert evaluation of qualitative parameters; 6 – expert evaluation of balance for rural functions in terms of parameters defining the assessment areas of "REGION-analysis"; 7 – acquisition of final synthetic coefficients based on the combination of qualitative and quantitative evaluations for each assessment area of "REGION-analysis"; 8 – justification of assessment scale for interpreting assessment results; 9 – grouping rural districts by the degree of balance of implementing functions.

3. Results

The applied value of the implemented calculations consists of the detailed analysis of deviations (from the average value) in social and economic functions of rural municipal territories in the Krasnodar region. Interpretation of intermediate results enables forming a complex "picture" of the territory from the standpoint of the degree of implementing its functions.

Table 3
Aggregate results of "REGION-analysis"

Ruralmunicipaldistricts	Social Block	Economic block
1.Beloglinsky district	1,755	1,360
2.Bryukhovetsky district	2,442	1,344
3.Vyselkovsky district	2,461	2,565
4. Dinskoy district	3,042	2,632
5. Kalininsky district	2,155	1,303
6.Kanevskoy district	2,731	2,174
7. Krasnoarmeysky district	2,770	1,899
8. Krylovsky district	2,038	1,324
9.Kushchevsky district	2,895	1,997
10. Leningradsky district	2,180	2,241

Rural municipal districts	Social Block	Economic block
11. Novopokovsky district	2,138	1,970
12. Otradnensky district	2,614	1,501
13. Pavlovsky district	2,571	2,033
14. Starominsky district	2,065	1,594
15. Tbilissky district	2,113	1,696
16. Uspensky district	1,897	1,518
17. Shcherbinovsky district	2,003	1,469
Average value	2,345	1,801

Interim values by sub-blocks are calculated by summing up all indicators in this sub-block, the average level of the indicator is the average value of the sum for analyzed districts. The deviation from the average value clearly shows the backward or advanced positions of the districts comparing to the regional average. The total values of the coefficients for social and economic blocks are calculated by summing up the interim final values by sub-blocks. These coefficients contain aggregate information about the quantitative and qualitative level of implementing social and economic functions of rural territories in the Krasnodar region. The synergy of two types of analytical calculations enables revealing general and specific characteristics of the functional status of rural settlements.

Based on the values of complex synthetic coefficients, we arranged a grouping of rural municipal districts in the Krasnodar region in terms of the degree of implementing social and economic functions (table 4).

Table 4
Grouping of rural municipal districts in Krasnodar region according to degree of implementing social and economic functions

Economic block of functions \ Social block of functions	Backward (below average value 2,345)	Advanced (above average value 2,345)
	Backward (below average value 1,801)	Beloglinsky district Kalininsky district Krylovsky district Starominsky district Tbilissky district Uspensky district Shcherbinovsky district
Advanced (above average value 1,801)	Leningradsky district Novopokovsky district	Vyselkovsky district Dinskoy district Kanevskoy district Krasnoarmeysky district Kushchevsky district Pavlovsky district

The distribution into groups enables identifying a significant array of territories with low levels of implementing socio-economic functions that required incentives from government authorities of various levels.

Thus, the subsequent involvement of rural areas in socio-economic projects should consider their weak and strong points as well as apply an adaptive approach to the implementable activities.

4. Conclusions

Based on the theoretical review of the Russian scientific literature as well as the results of the analytical approach, we made the following conclusions:

- sustainable development of rural territories is aimed at creating comfortable living condition in rural areas, meeting the needs of the rural population including young families and young specialists and their needs for comfortable housing;
- State policy should aim at improving the integrated outfitting of rural settlements with social and engineering infrastructure;
- promotion and popularization of achievements in the sphere of development of rural territories is important for shaping positive attitude towards the countryside and rural lifestyle;
- complex socio-economic processes in rural settlements require special methods of analysis, combining several analytical approaches;
- the division of analysis into social and economic blocks enables identifying the imbalance in implementing functions of rural territories and subsequently take into account these shortcomings in preparing targeted projects of stimulation and development;
- the author's methodological approach "REGION-analysis" includes 9 stages of implementation and 6 calculation sub-blocks (25 indicators) that allowed to form a complex picture of implementing socio-economic functions of the rural territories in the Krasnodar region. The allocated calculating sub-blocks act as a quantitative interpretation of the functional specificity of rural territories. Each indicator contains information on the level of development of a particular function, whereas the resulting synergetic coefficients identify the status of the functional blocks (social and economic);
- as a result of qualitative and quantitative analysis, we calculated synthetic coefficients for the degree of implementing socio-economic functions of the development of the Krasnodar region (according to the data for 2017), which enabled arranging the final grouping of rural territories to develop concrete measures to reduce the imbalance of the implementable functions.

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