The Grounds of Interconnection between International Environmental and International Economic Law in the Context of Russian Concept of International Law

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Abstract

Today under the conditions of still continuing global economic crisis, many States are trying to protect their economic sovereignty. Rather often they firstly sacrifice environmental interests. Interconnection between international environmental and international economic law (as elements of the international legal system) is essential both for the law-making and for the law-enforcement process. Natural resources are one of the main economic values of any State. Illegal offence against natural resources of the State should be qualified as a violation of the territorial integrity of that State. Adverse impact upon any State's environment should be considered as the offence against its sovereignty. On the other hand, all States have equal rights to their own economic development.

The problem at issue is particularly topical for Russia. On the one hand, natural resource sectors of the Russian economy still remain to be the most attractive for foreign investors. On the other hand, the ecosystems themselves, located in the territory of Russia are of a great value both for Russia and for the global community. The concept of sustainable development is in the focus of interconnection between international environmental and international economic law, which influences international legal regulation of international trade, investment, and financial relations.

In particular, multilateral environmental agreements (hereinafter MEA) and multilateral agreements of World Trade Organization (hereinafter WTO) often regulate similar relations, between one and the same subjects. Norms of certain multilateral agreements within the WTO stipulate environmental measures. At the same time, nearly 20 MEA contain provisions, which influence international trade and investment issues. This argument is evidenced by the decisions of the Dispute Settlement Body of the WTO.
From the economic point of view, the more efficient activity is such, which is not bound with the risk to cause transboundary environmental harm or at least bound with less environmental harm. States are obliged to guarantee that the economic activity under their jurisdiction and control should be executed with due consideration of other States’ interests and those of the global community on issues of environmental protection and prevention of transboundary harm. The problem of environmental protection of transboundary harm, caused by economic activity, which is not prohibited by international law, is a global problem. Most of the States executing international economic relations cause transboundary environmental harm to other States and suffer transboundary pollution themselves.

With the help of the interconnection between international environmental and international economic law, the regulation of international relations arising from causing transboundary environmental harm by economic activity and also its minimizing and most importantly its prevention, should become more efficient.
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Environmental protection is not only social, but also an economic objective

- World volume of illegal trade of endangered spices exceeds 6 billion US dollars per year
- Volume of fish consumption is 17 kilos for one person per year
- Population decline of blue-finned and red tuna since 1970 is 80%
- 630 million tons of hazardous wastes is produced every year

International legal regulation is one of the most efficient means to overcome a problem of exhaustion of natural resources

- International legal regulation system is most integral system of regulation of global connections.
- International legal regulation is more stable and less dependent on political disturbances.
- International legal regulation has clear content and binding force.
According to Russian legal doctrine the elements of the international legal mechanism are:

- Legal rule
- Legal relation
- Enforcement of legal rule

According to Russian concepts special parts of International law include:

- International law of human rights
- Law of international organizations
- Law of foreign relations
- Law of international treaties
- International marine law
- International law of the air
- International law of outer space
- International environmental law
- International economic law
- Law of peaceful setting of international disputes
- Law of international security
- International humanitarian law
- Law of international responsibility
- International criminal law

Rule-making of international environmental law and international economic law should be primary aimed at:

- Environmental protection
- Economic development
Principle of state sovereignty over national resources is a special principle of international environmental and international economic law

- All states have a right to free and independent development of the economy and exploitation of natural resources.
- This freedom is limited by obligation not to cause harm to the environment and economic development of other states.
- Third countries can have right of resource development under condition of consent of the state under sovereignty of which these natural resources are subjected.

There are 17 millions square km of virgin ecosystems (tundra, forest-tundra, boreal forest, peat bogs) on the territory of Russia.

Russia has the biggest fresh water capacity in the world (20%)
Concept of sustainable development is the basic element of interaction of international environmental law and international economic law

- Population decline of sturgeon in the Caspian Sea is from 114.7 million (1983) to 42.1 million (2012)

**WTO and sustainable development**

- Marrakesh Agreement establishing WTO
- General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
- Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade
- Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
- Agreement on Agriculture
- Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures
- Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, Including Trade in Counterfeit Goods
- General Agreement on Trade in Services

**Settlement of Disputes in WTO**

- United States – import prohibition of certain shrimp and shrimp products

[http://www.saveplanet.su](http://www.saveplanet.su)
Multilateral environmental agreements, containing trade restrictions

- Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), New York, 1992.


**Bilateral level (USA-Russia)**

- Agreement on trade relations between USSR and USA (1990)

**Liability for transboundary harm is stipulated by international treaties**

- Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy of 29th July (1960)
- Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage (1963)
- International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage (1969)
- Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (1992)

**Prevention of transboundary harm, caused by economic activity is a global problem**

[Links provided for additional information]
Conclusions

- In terms of interaction of international environmental law and international economy law the main goal is to develop economic relations on the one hand and to protect the environment on the other hand.
- Interaction of international environmental law and international economy law not only creates conflict, but helps more efficient and comprehensive regulation of international relations.
- Interaction of international environmental law and international economy law as elements of international law system is necessary for law-making and law-enforcement process.

Conclusions

- We can see the lack of theoretical and practical experience of states in the sphere of enforcement of international legal mechanisms for the prevention of transboundary harm caused by economic activity and liability for such harm.
- International legal mechanisms can be efficient enough on the condition of conclusion of a universal multilateral international treaty based on the principle of prevention of transboundary harm caused by economic activity.
- International legal liability for transboundary harm caused by economic activity is one of the most advanced instruments for protection of environment and economic development at one and the same time.