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Analyzing Belarus Green Growth and Sustainable Development: A Role Model for Regional States



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The paper focuses on the green trajectory of Belarus in the 21st Century vis-à-vis sustainable economic growth. The visionary government has adopted advanced trends for green growth that has become a role model for other regional states. Thus, the paper analyzes successful policies and strategies adopted by the Belarusian government under the grand vision 2030. The research is analytical and exploratory.

Belarus emerged as a sovereign state after the disintegration of the Soviets Union. Since its independence, the country has pursued a gradual strategic path characterized by robust reforms, economic diversity, and



advanced expansion of the public-private sector. Due to structural policy transformation, Belarus has been witnessing prosperity. The reason for its regional progress is the dynamic policies of the visionary statesman, His Excellency President Alexander Lukashenko. His prudent policies and plans contributed to increasing Belarus' regional and global outreach as a resilient country. This era has brought significant transformations as well as challenges for making societies and economies resilient in the light of urgent environmental and climate threats. These changes call for evolving models of growth to be updated. Presently, the shift has become more intrinsic in the context of the global health pandemic, the Coronavirus (Covid-19). Thus, the Belarusian state departments and dynamic government have been enhancing their efforts for developing infrastructure plans and maintaining a



healthy ecosystem while tackling environmental challenges vis-à-vis adapting to 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 2030).

In contemporary times, the concept of ‘green economy’ has taken into the debate as a response to combat environmental challenges which are jeopardizing economic growth. The implementation of ‘green economy’ principles by the Belarusian institutions is a clear manifestation of robust development in the country. The key areas include shifting to renewable energy, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, water conservation strategies, curbing Carbon emissions, and introducing environmental-friendly policies. Belarus has made promises to a green economy as a part of its cooperation with the European Union. At the national level, the environmental issues and green economy principles are framed into a number of strategic documents, i.e., the Environmental Protection Strategy until 2025 and National Strategy for Sustainable Socioeconomic Development until 2030. In the socio-economic context, green growth will provide many opportunities for new employment. In addition to that, a less wasteful and resource- efficient approach will enable a competitive economy. A well-maintained ecosystem, resorted land and forest will give robust ecological and economic benefits to the society.

Advanced Trends in Sustainable Development: Ecological Imperatives

According to an analysis of the report, Belarus emits about 0.2% of global Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. Prior to its independence, Belarus’s annual Carbon emissions were over 50% greater than over the past decade. Total emissions declined dramatically by 7 percent compared to the previous years, and a reduction of 42 percent compared to 1990 levels.



While analyzing the modern shift in Belarusian sustainable progress, it is important to highlight three major aspects of the ecological system, i.e., ‘*man-environment-economy*’ nexus. These three dimensions are interlinked. Environment reflects the use of natural resources. The process of man/environment interaction and designed parameters in this regard may support the ecological imperative amid social activities. In this regard, Belarus has successfully implemented the following indicators, i.e., tracking and evaluating the circumstances and evolution in the capacity of surroundings, including safeguarding the ecosystems used for economic purposes, implementing a set of activities designed to gradually reduce the anthropological stress on the environment, maintain stability and restore the natural ecosystem to protect human health, and elaborating and formulating an environmental policy based on the ecological imperative (a requirement by which ecological concerns are to be mainstreamed into socioeconomic development policies). The dynamic leadership of Belarus and state departments has improved utilities and altered governance mechanism aimed at correcting market failures related to the environment, thus ensured a better level of economic exchange with the other countries. In this aspect, a broader policy plan has already been made as per the directives of the European Union (EU). Moreover, Belarus is also facilitating expert knowledge sharing and collaboration towards the green economy.

Sustainable Progress and Green Decision Making: Agenda 2030 of Belarus

It has been clear that Belarus has taken a number of pragmatic steps to promote and ensure environmental sustainability. Belarus is committed to implementing Agenda 2030 at all three levels, i.e., national, regional, and global. For example, in 2017, at the UN headquarters in New



York, Belarus presented its voluntary national review, which reflected the start-up approaches to achieving a number of SDGs. In 2018, the Regional SDGs Coordination Leaders Forum for countries of Europe and Central Asia was organized. Its goal was to foster collaboration between national institutions responsible for achieving the SDGs. In 2019, a broad-based National Forum on Sustainable Development was held. Belarus participated in all the events, showing seriousness to curb common challenges. Under the dynamic leadership of President Alexander Lukashenko, the country has planned to develop climate action plans for all the major sectors of the state's economy in 2022. The plans will cover climate change mitigation, agriculture and forestry adaptation, low-carbon emission and many other domains. Belarus has high chances of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals 2030, considering that almost all Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were fulfilled ahead of schedule.

The total land areas with conditions for the conservation of biological diversity have increased because of robust planning. In this aspect, the situation with the availability of



housing and services has also improved in the country. World leaders recognized the significant success of such plans and appreciated Belarus' efforts towards a sustainable ecosystem. Moreover, the institutions have electrified transport system and invested in energy diversification and sustainability. The country has also been facilitating decentralized renewable energy systems (Solar energy) for schools, buildings, hospitals, and other public places. Socioeconomic security is interlinked to ecological security, a prerequisite for sustainable development. It is related to the wellbeing of humans and their surrounding environment from natural hazards and challenges from technological transformation, may it be an asset or liability. The modern ecological security level is connected with national development goals in Belarus.

Nature conservation activities commenced in Belarus brought successful outcomes by enhancing the quality of the environment to certain levels. Thus, the modern patterns, measures, and global & national imperatives reflect the strategic goal to achieve future aspirations and substantial improvement in public welfare. By gathering environmental and economic factors, Belarus is on the way to making policy and legislative changes, formulating planning and investment greener, stimulating innovative technologies, adopting new business models, and opening doors for green employment opportunities. It also demonstrates the promotion of better environmental governance relevant to sustainable trade with other regional partners of Belarus.

Renewable Energy Matrix:

Belarus experiences broad needs for energy security enhancement, energy diversification, and improvements in the state of the environment. Among the strategic tasks of raising the efficiency of



Belarus' economy, sustainable progress is necessary. Thus, shifting towards renewable energy resources and utilizing them will bring immense benefits. Fulfilling the task is possible through the creation of a national infrastructure conducive to increasing the share of local and renewable sources of energy (RES) in heat and power energy production. The geographic location of Belarus is important and has several advantages for extensive use of most renewable energy (RE) and bioenergy sources. The country holds vital potential in Renewable energy sector. Thereby, the contribution options have been similarly structured as per the requirements.

The above-mentioned assertions depict that the strategic goal of sustainable development in the national strategy is to ensure high living standards of the population and conditions for the harmonious development of the individual through the transition to a highly efficient economy based on knowledge and innovation while maintaining a favorable environment for current and future generations in Belarus. The green economy is becoming a new engine of growth, contributes to the creation of decent jobs, and is a vital factor in



the eradication of poverty and destitution. The main factors of the transition to a green economy and the main directions of its development in the Republic of Belarus have been prudently developed by the government. Thus, contributing to the national growth.

Furthermore, all these key characteristics promote the concept of a circular economy and the formation of business models for its implementation. In a nutshell, global cooperation and regional connectivity are vital for a clean, green, and resilient world. Emerging Non-traditional Security (NTS) threats, environmental hazards, and natural calamities have been occurring more frequently than expected. No state is immune from the devastating impacts of these menaces. Thus, green growth is a solution to such issues. In this aspect, the Belarusian model of green development is a precedent for other regional countries to follow. Colossal cooperation and knowledge sharing would bring milestone development to stimulate sustainable productivity and foster economic expansion.