

SUMMARY

Theories of the origin of the ecological crisis emerged in the 1960s as a reaction to social movements for environmental protection. At this time the ecological crisis was identified by the social sciences as one of the major issues in the modern society.

During the 1970s environmental sociology, which focuses on the relationship between society and the environment, was established. Special emphasis is put on research and analysis of the social factors which cause problems in the environment. It also deals with the impact these problems have on society, aiming to find solutions to these problems.

Today, at the beginning of the 21st century, there is a growing need for systematic interpretation of the global socio-ecological crisis partially caused by human activities. One of the manifestations of this crisis unmatched in history so far, is human caused global warming and climate change.

In order to understand the relationship between the fundamental processes going on in the modern society and the climate change, as well as the relationship between the authorities in Croatia and their attitudes towards the climate change policies we have:

- elaborated on the characteristics of the „high emission societies”;
- explained theoretically what the sociological dimensions of climate change are;
- analyzed the position of Croatia in the global context of greenhouse gas emissions, and determined the characteristics and the degree of „carbonization” of Croatian society;
- analyzed the roles of the parties relevant to global warming and climate change in Croatia;
- investigated what stance the authorities have on the efficiency of the state policies and procedures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions under Kyoto Protocol, and what the obstacles to the implementation of the Protocol are.

The introduction is followed by 6 chapters that constitute three thematic parts of the book. In the first, theoretical part (chapters 2,3 and 4), after a short explanation of the main concepts of environmental sociology, we investigate the specific role it has in dealing with climate change. The biggest contribution it has given us is the understanding of the social processes that cause climate change and the ways society needs to be innovative in order to find solutions to these problems.

The theoretical core of the paper consist of the analysis of societies labeled as ‘high-emission societies’. The main proposition is that the existing organization of modern

societies helps co-produce global warming and the climate change, thus threatening the existence of the societies themselves. Developed societies heavily rely on using fossil fuels and technologies which co-produce the greenhouse gases. Global warming is the direct consequence of the increase in the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

In the first part (chapter 4) we have also touched upon various sociological aspects of climate change such as the characteristics of the social configuration, consumerism, the meaning climate change takes on in society, (de)politicizing climatology, climate justice, and the sociology of the policies on climate change.

The second part of the book (chapter 5) analyzes Croatia position regarding GHG emissions in context of EU and world, and analyzes Croatia as a high-emission society affected by the process of 'carbonization'. Carbonization in this sense means heavily relying on fossil fuels for technological, organizational and economical development of a society. Within the analysis of carbonization we have explained what the characteristics of the three sectors of activity which most contribute to greenhouse gas emissions are. These three sectors are energetics, industry and agriculture.

The structure of the emissions of greenhouse gases based on their source is given, and then the emphasis is put on the emission trends in Croatia, climate change policies in Croatia and the analysis of the basic developmental strategies concerning the climate policies (energetic strategies and sustainable development). All of this has made it possible for us to determine some of major research instrument guidelines and the direction Croatia is taking in terms of the high emission society context.

The third thematical part of the book (chapter 6) elaborates on the results of the empirical research we conducted in order to explain the condition and efficiency of climate change policies in Croatia. Using qualitative research we have investigated the attitudes of the agents involved in the climate change policies in Croatia. We wanted to find out where Croatia stands on the implementation of state policies and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions under the Kyoto Protocol.

Within the research, semi-structured interviews have been conducted on a deliberate sample consisting of relevant social actors. This has been the source of information and data for analysis and understanding of the attitudes and reactions of Croatian people to the climate change.

The sample consisted of the people from: the public administration (various organizations and national ministries dealing with climate change); politics (the Parliament and the political parties); civil society (non-government organizations dealing with climate change); science (scientists working on projects dealing directly with climate change issues); entrepreneurs (businesses that either contribute most to the greenhouse gas emissions or the reduction of the greenhouse gases in Croatia).

These procedures have been used in the analysis: simultaneous data collection and analysis, multilevel coding, comparative analysis and conceptual analysis. In this way, we

have inductively developed some basic concepts that helped us answer the research questions. This way of data processing has been chosen in order to best achieve the aim of the research and understand the social behaviour within the climate change policies context.

The main conclusion of the research is that Croatia does not create systematic and coherent policies concerning climate change. Attitudes of the parties involved with the climate change policies in Croatia seem to be „chaotic”. Measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions have not been created in such a way as to contribute to the common cause. Although there is a significant number of individual measures to reduce emissions, their efficiency is lost in vague procedures which are not coordinated with other measures. There seems to be no real system that would keep track of specific problems.

We have also concluded that some of the basic elements a specific policy should have are missing; legislative frame, instruments of implementation, monitoring instruments, and sanctions. Although the state provided the legislative frame, it has not taken care of implementing the measures to reduce emissions. We primarily refer to the poor organization, „collisions” between different sectors’ measures, various contradictions in the laws themselves, a huge amount of bureaucracy, lack of personnel etc. In addition to that, the state has completely neglected to implement the monitoring systems which in turn means there is no way to self-evaluate or correct the mistakes.

The problem with the implementation of the climate policies such as incoherence of the institutions, poor coordination of the policies of various sectors, and inefficiency of the climate policies in general, is a direct consequence of the stance the government has on the climate change problem. If we leave out the topics that have emerged in interviews such as interest groups conflicts, lobbying and corruption, we are left with the poor climate change policy being indicative of unawareness and poor understanding of the importance of climate change. This is why these are low on the list of priorities of the government.

Dealing with issues such as high unemployment rate and poverty among a significant part of the population is obviously of higher priority and significance for the government. This is why the development of a comprehensive climate change policy is hindered and why the methods of dealing with primary problems are being carried out through projects which, even though sometimes economically justified in short term, are totally in collision with the long term policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.