The Mechanism of Cluster Policy Implementation in the Caucasus Mineral Waters Region

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Abstract: He creation of clusters in the Caucasian Mineral Waters (CMS) region is a strategically important step to increase competitiveness and sustainable development of the territory. However, in order for these clusters to function effectively, it is necessary to introduce management structures that will coordinate the actions of participants, attract investments and implement projects. In this context, coordinating councils and associations are key elements. Creating the necessary infrastructure as a key factor for the success of cluster policy development. These are the development of a transport network to facilitate logistics, information technology for the exchange of information between participants, the creation of research centers and innovation platforms. The creation of clusters in the Caucasian Mineral Waters (CMS) region is a strategically important step to increase competitiveness and sustainable development of the territory. However, in order for these clusters to function effectively, it is necessary.

1 INTRODUCTION

Caucasian Mineral Waters are the pearl of the North Caucasus. This is a unique region of Russia, known for its natural resources, mineral waters and resorts. In the context of a dynamically changing economic landscape, cluster policy is becoming an important tool for the integrated development of the region, which made it possible to combine the efforts of various participants on one platform. This article discusses the key aspects of the mechanism for implementing cluster policy in the CMS region, as well as its advantages and challenges

In order to make it more clear what we want to write about in our article, we will first define the concept of a "Cluster" — a group of interconnected companies and organizations located geographically in a limited area and closely interacting with each other, republics at the regional, regional and state levels. The cluster policy of the North Caucasus region is aimed not only at creating and maintaining such clusters as: tourism, agro-industrial, industrial balneological, but also to increase competitiveness at the regional level. The Caucasian Mineral Waters region is one of the most complex spatial and managerial structures in the country. This is due to:

firstly, as a specially protected ecologically clean resort region of federal significance. CMS are the territory of federal management competencies. This status, which ensures the increased attention of public authorities at the federal level, simultaneously imposes many restrictions;

Secondly, the CMS region is one of the few multipolar agglomerations in Russia without a clearly

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defined single planning and management center. Accordingly, like any other agglomeration, this is the territory of inter-municipal relations;

Thirdly, both as an ecological and resort region and as an agglomeration, the CMS region affects the territories of several subjects (Stavropol Territory, Karachay-Cherkess and Kabardinobalkar republics), which makes it a zone of interregional contacts. This combination of statuses determines the need and request for vertical (federation – regions – municipalities), interregional (Stavropol Territory – Karachay-Cherkessia – Kabardino-Balkaria-North Ossetia) and inter-municipal (municipalities within the agglomeration) management decisions. Moreover, if vertical ties in Russia are systematized and institutionalized, then the regulation of horizontal contacts does not solve all the issues that arise. That is why there are still not many examples of the creation of inter-municipal management structures in agglomerations in the country, and interregional contractual relations generally remain isolated, and such proposed federal measures to support interaction as horizontal subsidies remain weak in.

The purpose of the study is to develop, methodological support and practical implementation of cluster policy in the economic system of the Caucasian Mineral Waters with the integration of resort, sanatorium and tourist base resources into this process.

The object of the study is the clustering process of recreational and resort-sanatorium, tourist complexes of the Caucasian Mineral Waters, as the main component of the infrastructure development of the CMS clusters.

The subject of the study is the economic conditions, methods and models of the clustering process of the CMS economy.

The relevance of the study lies in the fact that there is a need to form, as part of the Russian Federation, a new macro-region - the North Caucasus Federal District (NCFD), which includes the Caucasian Mineral Waters and the Republic of Transcaucasia, consisting of regions that are fairly homogeneous in socio-economic and natural resource potential, the most backward in terms of development. For the Caucasian Mineral Waters, the task of effective regional development of cluster policy based on the use of the most progressive models is especially significant.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

The issue of interaction is considered in the most detail in the documents of strategic and territorial planning. There are many examples of insufficient consistency of documents at the federal, regional and municipal levels, documents of strategic, budgetary and territorial planning, inconsistency in the execution of documents and individual measures over time. At the same time, the issues of horizontal synchronization of these documents between neighboring regions and municipalities have not been considered in detail enough.

We have analyzed the existing management systems of territorial clusters and identified the stages of implementation of the mechanism of cluster policy of the Caucasian Mineral Waters.

The first step towards the implementation of the mechanism of the cluster policy of the Caucasian Mineral Waters is the updating of legislation regulating the activities of clusters in the region of the Caucasian Mineral Waters and the Transcaucasian republics The updating of legislation will consist of such important points as :

Determining the format of participation of business, science and government.

Establishment of tax incentives for enterprises operating in clusters.

Development of subsidy and support programs.

The creation of a legislative framework for the implementation of cluster policy is a key stage that allows creating conditions for effective interaction between various cluster participants: business, scientific institutions and authorities.

Below, we have described in detail the main directions that should be taken into account when developing updated legislation. We also examined the level and dynamics of the main macroeconomic indicators of the Caucasian Mineral Waters in comparison with the average Russian achievements. They showed the peculiarities of the Caucasian Mineral Waters and identified the main causes of lag and crisis, revealed the resource potential, justified the priority directions of their long-term socio-economic development, considered the problems of economic growth of the Caucasian Mineral Waters and the main factors of using cluster approaches.

According to the conducted scientific research, it has been revealed that the North Caucasian macroregion is experiencing serious difficulties in realizing its development potential. The problem of finding internal and external reserves of the region is especially relevant in connection with the imposition of sanctions and the need to stimulate the

implementation of domestic scientific and technical achievements, innovative development of the regions.

Due to the fact that the material and technical base of the sanatorium-resort complex is very outdated, high wear and tear of municipal and engineering infrastructure, insufficient provision of road transport infrastructure hinder the development of the CMS as a health and tourism cluster. Unfortunately, there are very small subsidies from the state, which did not allow to ensure the renewal of the old fund and the creation of new sanatorium and resort recreation facilities at the proper level. At the same time, the existence of restrictions for economic activity in unique natural territories does not make it possible to solve the above problems. A significant part of the territory of resort towns is located in the first and second zones of mining and sanitary protection. These zones, established in order to protect natural healing resources, have not been updated since 1985 and require revision.

• Among the huge number of regulatory acts regulating economic activities in the resorts, there are both duplicative and contradictory. Several simultaneous programs and strategies for the development of territories are also not coordinated with each other. At the same time, there is no public authority responsible for their implementation as a whole and coordination of the activities of all participants. But after President Vladimir Putin took under his jurisdiction the restoration of the sanatorium-resort region of the Caucasian Mineral Waters, much has changed. Firstly, a legislative framework has been created for the implementation of cluster policy mechanisms - this is a key stage in the development of Caucasian Mineral Waters;

secondly, conditions are being created for effective interaction between various cluster participants; thirdly, the mechanisms of the format of communication and cooperation between the participants of the North Caucasian Federal District, which includes the region of Caucasian Mineral Waters and the republics of Karachay–Cherkess, Kabardino-Balkarian, North Ossetian at the regional and state levels. This made it possible to create an infrastructure for joint projects, as well as a platform for the exchange of experience and knowledge on the rational use of natural resources. New legislation:

• provides for the possibility of forming professional associations that will help unite the efforts of cluster participants and ensure their representation in government bodies; The introduction of tax preferences for companies operating in clusters helps to stimulate investment and attract new participants. These tax preferences entail a reduction in income tax, exemption from property taxes and other forms of support;

• Tax incentives may also apply to research and development costs, which will help companies introduce new innovative technologies and increase competitiveness in the market of providing tourist and resort services;

• much attention is paid to the development of subsidy programs for both large companies operating in clusters and self-employed entrepreneurs, including government grants aimed at the development of sanatorium and tourist business, loans on preferential terms or co-financing of projects; the possibilities of financing educational programs aimed at training qualified personnel capable of working in clusters have been taken into account;

• State support is provided to research programs within the framework of "National Projects" for the development of clusters, funds are allocated for the creation of innovative laboratories, competence centers and research institutes.

Thus, the creation of a legislative framework for the development of the cluster policy mechanism is a complex process that requires taking into account the interests and needs of all participants. The right combination of tax incentives, support programs and interaction formats will contribute to the development of clusters and increase the competitiveness of the national economy as a whole and in the further development of the Caucasian Mineral Waters.

3 THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The creation of clusters in the Caucasus Mineral Waters (CMS) region is a strategically important step to increase competitiveness and sustainable development of the territory. However, in order for these clusters to function effectively, it is necessary to introduce management structures that will coordinate the actions of participants, attract investments and implement projects. In this context, coordinating councils and associations are key elements.

Coordinating councils are management bodies consisting of representatives of business, government and scientific communities who work together for the benefit of a particular cluster. Their main tasks are: formation of a strategy for the development of the CMS cluster mechanism, planning of joint projects and ensuring interaction between participants;

• Councils play an important role in creating an attractive investment climate, including developing

investment proposals, attracting investors and participating in investment forums.

• carry out regular analysis of the cluster's work, identify problems and find ways to solve them, as well as evaluate effective working methods;

• Interaction with local authorities to develop legislative initiatives that support the interests of cluster members.

Advantages of coordination councils:

• creation of a centralized structure for the formation of a joint vision and mission of the cluster;

• Ensuring a dynamic exchange of information between different participants;

• strengthening ties between business, science and government, which contributes to a more effective solution to the urgent problems of the region.

2 Cluster member associations serve as an important tool for bringing together cluster members. They are informal associations whose purpose is to share experiences, represent common interests and lobby for necessary changes. The main functions of associations include the exchange of experience and knowledge: associations allow participants to share best practices, innovations and successful cases, which accelerates the development of all members. Associations create a space for discussing issues, problems and ideas, which promotes more open communication and collaboration. Associations can carry out lobbying at the level of local, regional and federal authorities, as well as represent the interests of their members in media and public discussions. Associations can hold seminars, conferences and exhibitions that promote the popularization of the cluster and its products on the market.

Advantages of the association:

• strengthening the positions of cluster members by pooling resources and efforts;

• increasing the visibility of the cluster and its representatives in public and business circles;

• the formation of cohesion between the participants, which leads to greater mutual understanding and cooperation.

The formation of governing structures — coordinating councils and associations — is a critically important stage in the development of cluster structures in the Caucasian Mineral Waters region. These organizations will contribute to the effective coordination of participants' actions, attract investments and implement projects, which, in turn, will ensure stable growth and development of the region. The creation of such structures will provide a solid basis for the interaction of business, government and science, which is necessary for the successful implementation of the cluster development model.

4 DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

Despite the promising advantages of implementing a cluster policy development mechanism in the Caucasian Mineral Waters, we are faced with a number of problems: a lack of funding and limited budgetary resources can become an obstacle to the successful creation of clusters; incomplete coordination between institutions and the executive branch. Different verticals of government can create additional difficulties in the implementation of projects; lack of information transparency, as access to relevant information and statistics is necessary for successful planning of the cluster mechanism development strategy and their current assessment.

The implementation of the cluster policy in the Caucasus Mineral Waters region is a strategic step towards improving the socio-economic situation. By focusing on the interaction between different sectors of the economy, the region has every chance to achieve significant development and increase competitiveness. At the same time, it is necessary to solve emerging problems and challenges by searching for flexible and innovative solutions that will ensure the sustainable development of the region in the long term.

The Caucasian Mineral Waters (CMS) represent a unique territory with great economic and natural resources. The formation of clusters in this region makes it possible to use the existing potential more effectively, contributes to economic development and competitiveness. Let's consider the main types of clusters that can be created in the region of Caucasian Mineral Waters.1.

The tourism cluster in the Caucasus Mineral Waters region plays a key role due to its unique natural resources, numerous sanatoriums and medical institutions. The development of this cluster is aimed at uniting all participants in the tourism process, including:

• sanatoriums and medical institutions: offering treatment and procedures based on mineral waters;

• hotels and resorts: providing comfortable accommodation and services for vacationers;

• Restaurants and cafes: offering local cuisine and traditional dishes;

• Cultural and entertainment facilities: theaters, exhibition halls, tour desks offering a variety of cultural events.

Advantages of the tourism cluster:

• increasing the attractiveness of the region for tourists, both domestic and foreign;

• creation of new jobs in the service sector and tourism;

• development of infrastructure, including transport communications, which in turn contributes to an increase in the number of visitors.

3 The agro-industrial cluster in the CMS is focused on the production and processing of agricultural products. The region is famous for its diversity of flora and fauna, which creates excellent conditions for:

• Production of environmentally friendly products such as fruits, vegetables and dairy products.

• The development of organic agriculture aimed at maintaining the natural balance and the application of sustainable farming methods.

• Support local farmers and producers, which helps to develop the local economy.

Advantages of the agro-industrial cluster:

• improving the quality and accessibility of food for local residents;

• expansion of export potential through the production of high-quality and environmentally friendly products;

• Strengthening the food security of the region and creating a sustainable economy.

4 The industrial cluster at CMS is focused on the unification of industrial enterprises, which makes it possible to increase the overall efficiency of production processes. Among the directions of this cluster may be:

• Manufacturing companies working in the field of processing local resources (for example, the light and food industries);

• innovative startups engaged in the development of technologies to improve production efficiency;

• logistics companies providing transportation of products and raw materials.

Advantages of an industrial cluster:

• increase productivity and reduce costs through cooperation and exchange of experience between enterprises;

• Support for research initiatives and the introduction of modern technologies.

• Creation of new jobs, which leads to an improvement in the socio-economic situation in the region.

Clusters in the Caucasus Mineral Waters region have huge potential for economic growth and social development. Combining efforts in the tourism, agro-industrial and industrial clusters will not only make effective use of natural and human resources, but also significantly increase the competitiveness of the region in foreign and domestic markets, which will undoubtedly have a positive impact on the lives of local residents.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The creation of clusters in the Caucasus Mineral Waters (CMS) region is a strategically important step to increase competitiveness and sustainable development of the territory. However, in order for these clusters to function effectively, it is necessary to introduce management structures that will coordinate the actions of participants, attract investments and implement projects. In this context, coordinating councils and associations are key elements.

Creating the necessary infrastructure as a key factor for the success of cluster policy development. These are the development of a transport network to facilitate logistics, information technology for the exchange of information between participants, the creation of research centers and innovation platforms.

We have provided a more detailed overview of each of the mentioned aspects: ensuring reliable transport links between cluster members is the main factor for optimizing logistics. This includes both road and rail routes, as well as airports and seaports. This and the wide possibilities of multimodal transportation, which allow combining different modes of transport, can significantly reduce delivery time and reduce transport costs, improving conditions for freight and passenger transport can contribute to more intensive interaction between companies and scientific institutions in the cluster. The introduction of modern information systems and platforms for data exchange allows cluster participants to receive timely up-to-date information, which, in turn, contributes to rapid decision-making.

The development of specialized software solutions for project management, exchange of experience and coordination of joint research can improve the effectiveness of interaction between participants.

Providing access to high-speed Internet and data centers also plays an important role in supporting innovation.

Creation of research centers and innovation platforms.

The presence of research and educational institutions integrated into the cluster contributes to the development of new technologies and innovative solutions. Innovation platforms (incubators, accelerators) can support startups and small businesses by providing them with access to resources, financing and mentoring.

Cooperation between universities, scientific institutes and industrial enterprises can stimulate the practical application of scientific developments and

accelerate the introduction of innovations into production.

Thus, the strategic development of infrastructure in these areas creates favorable conditions for the growth of clusters, attracts investors and contributes to the formation of a competitive economy.

To achieve the success of cluster policy development, qualified personnel are needed. This requires: the development of training programs in conjunction with educational institutions. Conducting seminars, trainings and conferences to improve the professional skills of employees.

Advantages of the development of cluster policy mechanisms: firstly, an increase in competitiveness, which allows cluster participants to be more efficient, secondly, investments become more attractive to external investors due to the presence of a clear strategy for the development of the cluster policy of the Caucasian Mineral Waters;

- thirdly, the development of clusters contributes to the creation of new jobs and retention of the population in the region;

- fourth, innovation and technological progress occur due to cooperation between science and business, knowledge exchange and best practices take place.

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