

## ASPECTS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AT MINING ENTERPRISES IN THE REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

*Научная статья / Research article*

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*This article examines the economic aspects of development and management in the mining industry. The interconnections between the development and management system and the organizational-economic management mechanism are explored, and an analysis of specific management aspects affecting the pace and conditions of enterprise development in the sector is provided. The mining sector remains a key area in the development of Tajikistan's economy, offering significant socio-economic benefits by creating new jobs and fostering infrastructure development at the regional level. One worker engaged in mining can create eight additional jobs in related sectors. Given these key aspects, scientific research assessing the problems and factors influencing the development of the mining sector remains relevant, as the success of this area significantly impacts the overall functioning of the national economy.*

**Keywords:** *mining industry, social expenses, enterprise, organizational and economic mechanism, management, production efficiency, minerals, deposits.*

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## АСПЕКТЫ УСТОЙЧИВОГО РАЗВИТИЯ ГОРНОДОБЫВАЮЩИХ ПРЕДПРИЯТИЙ В РЕСПУБЛИКЕ ТАДЖИКИСТАН

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*В статье рассматриваются экономические аспекты развития и управления предприятиями горнодобывающей промышленности, а также взаимосвязи системы развития и управления с организационно-экономическим механизмом управления. Предоставлен анализ отдельных аспектов управления, оказывающих влияние на темпы и условия развития предприятий отрасли. Горнодобывающий сектор остается ключевой областью в развитии экономики Таджикистана и приносит существенные социально-экономические выгоды, создавая новые рабочие места и способствуя развитию инфраструктуры на региональном уровне. Один рабочий, занятый в горной добыче, способен создать 8 дополнительных рабочих мест в прилегающих сферах. С учетом данных ключевых аспектов, научные исследования, оценивающие проблемы и факторы, влияющие на развитие горнопромышленного сектора, остаются на уровне актуальности, поскольку успех этой области существенно влияет на общее функционирование национальной экономики.*

**Ключевые слова:** *горнодобывающая промышленность, социальные расходы, предприятие, организационно-экономический механизм, управление, эффективность производства, полезные ископаемые, месторождения.*

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The mining industry of Tajikistan has a strong mineral resource base, sufficient to ensure the long-term development of the sector. Traditionally, mining enterprises in the republic extracted ore and conducted its primary processing with the production of concentrates, while the metallurgical processing took place outside the republic.

The mining industry plays a significant role in the national economy of the country, contributing 7,69% to the total GDP in 2022 and providing employment for more than 12,800 workers in the industrial sector.

The sector's contribution to the national economy is demonstrated in Fig. 1.

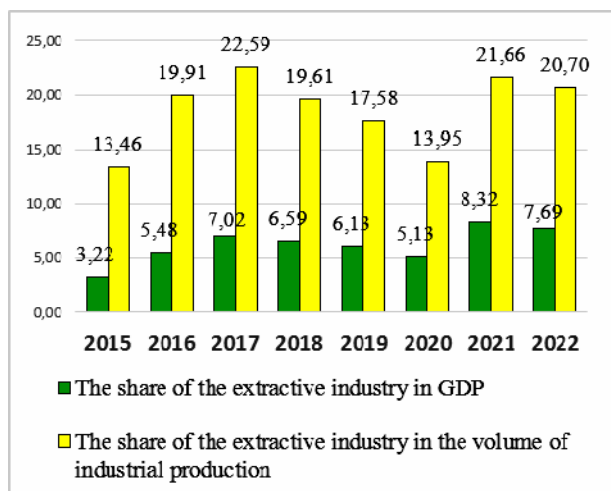


Fig. 1. Dynamics of the role of the extractive sector in the economy of Tajikistan

Resource: [Промышленность Республики Таджикистан... 2023].

2022, the growth rate of the mining sector was lower than the growth rate of production volume in the industry as a whole (Table 1). Mining enterprises contribute a significant amount to the state budget through the payment of various taxes. A substantial share of the total taxes paid by mining companies consists of taxes on natural resources and profit tax. In 2019, the share of the natural resource tax in

Table 1

#### Growth rate of production volume, %

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Industrial growth rates	121,3	110,6	113,2	108,8	120,8	109,7
Growth rates of the mining industry	121,7	112	112,6	97,4	155,2	97,3
Extractive industry lead factor	1,00	1,01	0,99	0,90	1,28	0,89

Resource: [Статистический ежегодник... 2023].

the total payments made by mining companies in the country was 38,1%, in 2020 it was 45,8%, and in 2021 it was 41,0%, while the profit tax accounted for 28,1, 24,5 and 29,9%, respectively. In general, the tax revenue from mining companies in 2019 amounted to 1470,5 million somoni, in 2020 it was 1318,4 million somoni, and by 2021 it reached 2159,2 million somoni [4-й Национальный отчет... 2021].

In the global economic system, countries compete with each other based on the constant growth of innovative ideas and their effective implementation. The superiority of a particular state is determined by the ability of its national economy to undergo qualitative transformations, which depend on the effectiveness of socio-economic development. Therefore, the opportunities for a state to achieve sustainable development and improve the efficiency of national resource use are linked to the transition to an innovative development model. Moreover, this model should not be limited only to the introduction of new technologies, but also emphasize the role of human capital. Insufficient attention to the importance of the social aspect of development is manifested in the underestimation of methodological support for the development of a sustainable development strategy focused on improving developmental parameters. The chosen areas of development should create conditions for a balanced satisfaction of the needs of industrial enterprises [Ганицкий 1991].

It is important to note that the successful connection of technological innovations with social issues of economic development occupies a special place in ensuring stable and productive economic progress. One of the crucial stages in this context is the improvement of theoretical concepts, methodologies, and management principles aimed at creating closer interaction between economic and social aspects, as well as balancing social and economic interests when selecting the most rational mechanism for their implementation. Addressing this significant issue will not only facilitate the transition to an innovative development model but will also create conditions for the effective and sustainable operation of enterprises in the mining sector in the future.

Currently, the global economy is characterized by global integration, the pace of scientific and technological advancements, as well as information technologies, and an increase in competition in international raw material markets. The extraction of natural resources is intensifying in various countries with specific reserves. Along with the rise in production, global demand for raw materials is also increasing, promoting fierce economic competition for access to these resources. This leads to a rise in the number of participants in this competition. As a result, there have been significant price changes in raw materials, which have fluctuated threefold over the past five years [Каплан 2015].

It is important to note that in this context, both the amplitude and frequency of price fluctuations are increasing. This dynamic creates additional challenges for mining companies and countries that rely on price stability for raw materials. In this regard, it is crucial to develop strategies that effectively manage these fluctuations and ensure resilience in the face of intense competition in global markets.

Tajikistan has embarked on the path of finding its niche as one of the exporters of various ores and their concentrates. It is essential to emphasize the importance of the mining industry, as it remains a key driver for progress in all sectors of the national economy. In general, the mining industry is not only a leading type of economic activity but also serves as a fundamental source of the mineral resource base and energy resources necessary for the existence and development of processing industries.

In Tajikistan, the source of funding for geological exploration activities mainly comes from the state budget, which accounted for 94,6% of the total amount in 2022, compared to 57,9% in 2015. Additionally, funds obtained through contracts with other organizations on behalf of the clients accounted for 5,4% in 2022, whereas in 2015, this figure was 42,1%<sup>1</sup>.

The adoption of new technologies and sustainable mining methods in the mining industry can also play an important role in reducing negative environmental impacts and ensuring sustainable development in the region. This underscores not only the economic but also the ecological importance of developing this sector in mountainous areas [Шарифзода 2024].

Thanks to extensive geological exploration, a number of mineral deposits have been discovered, studied, and partially developed for extraction in the depths of Tajikistan. Among these deposits are ores of lead, zinc, copper, bismuth, antimony, and mercury, as well as precious metals in the form of molybdenum, tungsten, iron, tin, boron raw materials, strontium, fluorite, rock salts, ornamental, semi-precious, and precious stones, construction stones, and various mineral raw materials intended for use in the construction materials industry. Additionally, reserves of coal, anthracite, graphite, oil and gas, ozokerite, underground freshwater, thermal and mineral waters, phosphorites, and numerous other valuable minerals representing significant potential for the country's economic development have also been identified [Sharifzoda 2024].

In the territory of the Sughd region 214 deposits of various mineral resources have been discovered, including lead, zinc, copper, bismuth, molybdenum, tungsten, strontium, iron, gold, silver, coal, tin, fluorite, rock salt, and other metallic and non-metallic materials, including precious and semi-precious metals, in addition to deposits of antimony and mercury. Estimates indicate a high value of mineral resources and metals, especially gold, silver, zinc, antimony, and lead, exceeding billions of dollars

<sup>1</sup> National bank of Tadjikistan. URL: <https://nbt.tj/ru/statistics/tavozuni-pardokhti-jt/sarmoyaguzori-oi-mustakimi-khorii/index.php> (дата обращения: 15.09.2024).

at the «Uchkad» deposit. On the basis of the explored deposits, various operations have been established, including mines, coal mines, quarries, mining and processing plants, non-ferrous metallurgy and chemical industry factories, cement plants, waste material processing facilities, sanatoria and resorts, as well as complexes for the use of thermal waters.

For a country where 93% of the territory consists of high mountain peaks, issues of developing geological exploration and the effective use of mineral raw materials remain crucial in the pursuit of strengthening the economy and achieving economic independence.

There is a need for special attention to be paid to sustainable management of natural resources to preserve the region's wealth for future generations and to minimize environmental impact.

Abundant reserves of valuable minerals located in the country's subsoil, with relatively favorable mining and geological conditions for extraction, have become the foundation for forming and developing a powerful mining industry. This industry continuously increases the volume of mineral extraction, which significantly contributes to the country's economic growth. Given the prospects provided by substantial mineral reserves, the industrial mining opportunities in the country are becoming increasingly significant. Through the expansion of mining activities, the resource potential of the country is becoming an important factor in supporting sustainable economic development.

As M.T. Karimova rightly notes in her work, «Management of the structural reorganization of industry in the region should be viewed as a targeted influence by government and local authorities on changing the relationships, content of constituent elements, established proportions and connections between them, with the aim of creating an effective foundation for the region's self-development, focused on improving the standard and quality of life for the region's population» [Каримова, Шарифзода 2023]. Thus, when developing a strategy for the mining sector, an important direction is the emphasis on the development of local mining enterprises. One of the key aspects of developing mining enterprises is the significant impact of their social policies on

the economic development of the business entity itself, as well as on the level of development of the territory in which it operates.

In developed countries, social expenditures typically range from 30 to 45% of GDP. In the Republic of Tajikistan in 2022, state expenditures on healthcare, physical culture, education, culture, and social policy as a whole remained significantly lower compared to developed countries, amounting to approximately 4% of GDP.

The insufficient allocation of public financial resources for social development, compared to developed countries, leads to the responsibility for achieving an acceptable living standard for the population being largely placed on mining enterprises.

In many situations, mining enterprises play a key role in the economy of their region or even serve as the backbone of the local economy. This is due to the fact that a portion of the taxes generated from their activities is allocated to local budgets.

Thus, the social policy implemented by these enterprises and the stability of their operations are crucial for the level and quality of life of the population, as well as for the social environment in the regions and surrounding areas (Table 2).

The mining enterprise is a complex organism that encompasses a variety of technological, economic, and social characteristics, which significantly influence its structure, functioning, and development prospects. This influential complex of interrelated factors creates a unique environment in which the enterprise must confront challenges and strive to achieve new heights [Industry of the Republic of Tajikistan... 2023].

Recent global changes in the socio-economic sphere, noticeable in many countries over the past decades, have affected the external environment of mining enterprises. These changes have intensified and made competition more demanding. In this new context, both the pace and amplitude of fluctuations in global prices for mineral resources are increasing, alongside a growing need to update technological equipment. Despite certain achievements, the efficiency of resource utilization in mining enterprises in the Republic of Tajikistan is significantly lower than that of foreign counter-

Table 2

**Social services to the local population, thousand somoni**

	Support for education	Support for social infrastructure	Quasi-fiscal expenditures	Total	In, %
LLC «TVEA Dushanbe Mining Industry»	–	2566,8		2566,8	3,8
LLC «Zarink»	2,5	210		212,5	0,3
LLC «Talco Gold»	–	215		215,0	0,3
Subsidiary Mine Fon-Yagnav	4,5	–	667,0	671,5	1,0
LLC «Joint Venture Zarafshan»		11025,5		11025,5	16,3
LLC «Pakrut»		50,0		50,0	0,1
LLC «Tajik-Chinese Mining Company»	7,1	49034,9		49042,0	72,6
TA LLC JV «Anzob»	281,9	847,6		1129,6	1,7
LLC «Joint Venture Takom Gold»		2661,0		2661,0	3,9
Total	296,0	66610,8	667,0	67573,9	100

Resource: [Каримова, Шарифзода 2023].

parts. Strategic development and continuous modernization are essential for improving competitiveness.

The achievement of a competitive level of production efficiency is based on its uninterrupted development. In this regard, it is important to strive for continuous alignment of its development parameters with the external environment throughout its operational period, which can last 30 years or more. In the context of rapid transformation in both the external and internal environments, only those mining enterprises that can effectively respond to dynamic changes and adapt to new challenges will maintain durability and viability [Промышленность Республики Таджикистан... 2022].

The intensification of dynamic processes in the global economic situation and the exacerbation of competition in the global mineral resource market compel mining companies in the country to actively pursue efficiency improvements and the implementation of innovative development strategies.

Given the complex and multifaceted nature, technical challenges, economic changes,

and organizational nuances of mining enterprises, it is essential to focus on achieving superior growth rates compared to competitors.

One of the key characteristics of mining enterprises is their efficiency dependence on the objective parameters of the deposit on which they are based. Unlike processing enterprises, mining companies, by their nature, can not operate without a mineral deposit, i.e., outside their own subsoil. Their potential, productivity, and scale are directly influenced by the volume and quality of resources, their market value, and the necessity for deep processing [Промышленность Республики Таджикистан... 2023].

Currently, there is a trend towards the processing of large deposits that are either in the active development stage or in conservation due to the depletion of the most valuable reserves. Among the recently developed deposits,

priority is given to those with a limited lifespan (10–30 years) or those that have significant reserves but lower quality of valuable minerals. Small deposits, even if they contain high-quality raw materials with reserves for 3–5 years, do not attract investment interest because the economic benefit from their development does not compare favorably with the organizational, financial, and time costs of their exploitation [Industry of the Republic of Tajikistan... 2022].

The small scale of minerals in these deposits leads to certain problems in decision-making, stemming from the need for planning and developing mining enterprises for the long term. The productivity and stability of development in the mining sector significantly depend on the inertia of technological processes and the constantly changing external and internal conditions. The duration of the formation and development of a mining enterprise is determined by the peculiarities of its establishment and the availability of capital investments. In remote areas, the development of deposits requires the construction of social and technical infrastructure, as well as en-

richment plants, which can significantly increase the project's cost.

In addition, mining enterprises rely on the project as a key document for decision-making, which is mandatory. As a result, this naturally affects production indicators due to changes in geological and mining conditions. The practice of operating quarries with deep mineral deposits shows that as the depth of development increases, changes occur. Within the framework of traditional design, the process of developing and approving decisions extends over a year or more. Consequently, the decisions made become outdated even before they have practical significance, which, in turn, negatively impacts the efficiency and sustainability of the enterprise's development. Established timeframes for design lead to deviations from the optimal development trajectory and are often accompanied by an increase in current expenses of 20–30%. Dynamic changes in environmental parameters result in the growth and accumulation of deviations from project benchmarks. A significant number of mining enterprises are unable to achieve even half of the project's level. The unrealistic nature of meeting the planned levels of equipment and personnel productivity, along with deviations of actual values from project levels, leads to a loss of control over the operation. As a result, most decisions aimed at ensuring the sustainability of socio-economic development are associated with high risks, and the planned outcomes remain uncertain [2<sup>nd</sup> National Report... 2017].

The discrepancy between the actual parameters and the levels provided in the project leads to a loss of control over the facility. As a result, most plans aimed at achieving sustainable socio-economic development are associated with significant risks, and the expected outcomes remain uncertain. The variability of the internal environment of a mining enterprise is explained by the specifics of its functioning. The production parameters of mining operations are determined by geological, hydrogeological and meteorological conditions, which cannot be stable and predictable. Throughout the operational period of a mining enterprise, which averages 20–30 years, changes in market conditions, legislation, owner preferences, and production development strategies are inevitable.

The production characteristics of geological exploration work depend on geological,

hydrogeological and meteorological conditions, which cannot be stable and predictable. Throughout the lifespan of an economic entity, changes in market conditions, national legislation, owner priorities, and production development strategies are bound to occur<sup>1</sup>.

To achieve stable operations in an environment characterized by high dynamism in technological processes, a non-working reserve of resources accumulates in the quarry, machinery and personnel. Connections become stretched and equipment utilization becomes ineffective.

Many innovative technologies capable of improving the economic efficiency of mining production remain unimplemented due to the importance of significant organizational changes. Despite certain positive transformations occurring, domestic mining enterprises still lag behind advanced foreign counterparts, and the gap between them persists. Workplaces are characterized by low productivity, leading to an increase in personnel numbers and the creation of surplus support positions. This growth in numbers is accompanied by additional expenses for the development and maintenance of social infrastructure. Experience in the mining sector shows that increasing production efficiency is often linked to the introduction of high-capacity mining transport equipment.

In recent decades, large mining operations have been equipped with powerful technological complexes, including excavators. Over the past thirty years, the average bucket capacity of excavators in coal deposits has doubled.

At the same time, the adoption of new equipment is often accompanied by updates to machinery without prior organization of the necessary preparatory measures. This includes the establishment of work sites and supporting processes, and it is also important to focus on retraining and preparing personnel<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> national report on the implementation of the transparency initiative in the extractive industries in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2017–2018. Dushanbe, 2019. 103 p. URL: [eiti.org/sites/default/files/attachments/russian\\_2017-2018\\_eiti\\_report\\_tajikistan.pdf](http://eiti.org/sites/default/files/attachments/russian_2017-2018_eiti_report_tajikistan.pdf) (дата обращения: 15.09.2024).

<sup>2</sup> National development strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the period until 2030. URL: [https://www.mid.tj/uploads/main/2013/03/strategiya-rusi-15-08-2016\\_badi-takhrir.pdf](https://www.mid.tj/uploads/main/2013/03/strategiya-rusi-15-08-2016_badi-takhrir.pdf) (дата обращения: 15.09.2024).

As a result, the use of new equipment, when applied in an inefficient organization, does not reach the expected level of production efficiency. This factor becomes an obstacle to implementing innovative technologies that require comprehensive changes in management methods and production organization in quarries. Significant improvement in the technical and economic characteristics of pro-

duction is impossible without comprehensive changes in the applied management methods and structure, which entails considerable resource costs for each unit of produced goods. Improving the organization of management in mining enterprises should be a priority in developing the strategy for the development of the mining sector in the country.

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