

## METHODS OF AUDIT OF OPERATIONS WITH ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS AND OBLIGATIONS: MODERN STATE AND DEVELOPMENT

### МЕТОДИКИ АУДИТА ОПЕРАЦИЙ С ЭКОЛОГИЧЕСКИМИ АКТИВАМИ И ОБЯЗАТЕЛЬСТВАМИ: СОВРЕМЕННОЕ СОСТОЯНИЕ И РАЗВИТИЕ

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**Abstract.** The modern state of audit of environmental issues of accounting (financial) reporting of business entities is investigated in the article. Based on the application of an integrated approach to segmentation of accounting and reporting data, we propose methods for auditing transactions with environmental assets and liabilities, which will contribute to improving the quality of the work of the audit organization, the ability in full to reliably estimate the impact on environmental reporting of the entity being audited.

**Keywords:** environmental assets; environmental liabilities, audit of environmental issues, accounting reports, integrated approach, segmentation of information.

#### **Introduction**

In order to reduce the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, the audit firm needs to implement an audit methodology that can provide sufficient evidence to establish the reliability of data on the environmental assets and liabilities of the entity being audited. The working documentation of the auditor should reflect all actions and conclusions regarding the environmental issues investigated during the audit of the organization. The reliability of audit information conducted by an independent and qualified professional increases the credibility of the organization's reports. However, at present there are no developed methods for auditing environmental assets and liabilities of the organization. The list of procedures for verifying the substantive environmental issues of the organization as set out in the Rules of Auditing "Accounting for Environmental Issues in the Audit of Accounting (Financial) Reporting" in the Republic of Belarus is not complete and exhaustive, in our view. It can lead to a decrease in the quality of the work of the audit firm, the inability to fully reliably assess the impact on the entity's reporting of environmental issues, the expression of inauthentic opinions in the audit report.

#### **Main part**

The approach to segmentation of accounting information influences the formation of the audit methodology of organizations. As such, literary sources include: on-object and (or) cyclic. Attention to these approaches in their work is paid by scientists: N.V. Parushina and S.P. Suvorov [1]; L.V. Gusarova [2]; R.N. Sungatullina and E.A. Klinov [3]; I.N. The rich [4]; HELL. Sheremet and V.P. Suiz [5]. As the P.Ya. Papkovskaya emphasizes "... relying on the substantive knowledge of the object of research ..." [6, p. 29] it is possible to implement a consistent set of control actions that form the audit methodology.

Based on the study of the essential content of each of the approaches to segmentation of accounting information that are used in the audit, and the advantages and disadvantages of these approaches, it can be concluded that they are integrated in the practice of auditing environmental issues. The results of the study justify the scheme of the proposed integrated approach when conducting an audit of environmental issues in the accounting reporting of organizations [7, p. 63-

75]. We believe that one of the components of environmental issues of the organization are environmental assets and liabilities reflected in the system of accounting accounts both on balance sheet accounts and off-balance accounts.

Taking into account the cyclical approach, the audit methodology for operations with environmental assets covers two business cycles: nature management and nature protection activities, as well as their subcycles. It is important to take into account that cycles (subcycles) contain various economic operations for long-term and short-term environmental assets, leading to their increase, reduction and use.

The cycle of nature use in the part of operations with environmental assets of the entity being audited will consist of sub-cycles by types of activity in the use of resources and objects of audit will be the operations:

- with long-term environmental assets of nature management (for example: resources of plant and animal origin, land plots, various rights to natural resources, equipment and installations for the use of water, subsoil, forests, acquired environmental assets from borrowed sources of financing (state support and non-repayable assistance) , capitalized costs of environmental management resources, etc.): receipt, disposal and transfer of long-term environmental assets of nature use.

- with short-term environmental assets of nature management (for example: resources of plant and animal origin as part of stocks, current costs for land and resource use for repairs, maintenance, landscaping, costs for land reclamation, payments under licenses and leases of resources nature use, etc.): receipt, use and disposal of short-term environmental assets of nature use.

- with environmental assets of nature management on off-balance sheet accounting (for example: current costs for land plots and nature management resources for repairs, maintenance, improvement and gardening, costs for land reclamation, payments under licenses and leases for nature use resources, etc.): receipt and disposal of environmental assets of nature use.

The cycle of environmental activities of the entity being audited in the part of operations with environmental assets will consist of sub-cycles and the objects of audit will be operations:

- with long-term environmental assets of nature protection activities (for example: equipment and installations for environmental protection activities that prevent or prevent pollution, various rights to environmental protection resources, acquired environmental assets from borrowed sources of financing (state support and non-repayable assistance), capitalized costs resources of nature protection measures, etc.), sub-cycle nature protection measures: receipt, disposal and ne emeschenie long-term environmental asset conservation.

- with short-term environmental assets of environmental activities (for example: current costs for repairing equipment and installations for environmental protection measures that prevent or prevent pollution of the environment, reserves for preventing or preventing environmental pollution, insurance for damages, fines, penalties for damages, etc. .) Sub-cycle Current environmental activities: receipt, use and disposal of short-term environmental assets of environmental activities .

- with environmental assets of environmental activities on off-balance sheet accounting (for example: current costs for repairing equipment and installations for environmental protection measures that prevent or prevent pollution of the environment, reserves for preventing or preventing environmental pollution, insurance for damages, fines, penalties for damages and others): receipt and disposal of environmental assets of nature protection activities.

We believe that the audit procedure should begin with the study of primary documents for the recording of transactions with environmental assets of nature management and (or) environmental activities. At the same time, the presence of title documents such as licenses, permits, etc. is established. Confirmation of the lawfulness and assessment of the reliability of these business transactions is carried out on the basis of studying the current regulatory and legislative provisions. The primary documents reflecting operations with environmental assets for these cycles include: invoices; invoices for internal movement; acts of reception and transmission; commissioning acts; inventory cards; acts on write-offs, etc. In this connection, it should be noted that the author's proposals for supplementing the details of inventory cards for recording fixed assets and intangible assets with information on the type of activity (nature use and nature protection activities) will allow

to identify environmental assets by cycles and sub-cycles of economic activities. The procedure for the audit of primary documents makes it possible to verify the timeliness of the assignment of environmental assets to materially responsible persons. For this purpose, inventory cards and contracts of material responsibility are verified. During the audit, special attention is paid to the presence of blots and erasures in them, in order to establish the reliability of the accounting records in the accounting registers for transactions with environmental assets.

Further, an analysis of analytical and synthetic accounting is performed based on data from registers, which reflect transactions with environmental assets in cycles and sub-cycles of economic activity. At the same time, information is used to study the working chart of the accounts of the audited entity for the purpose of analyzing the system of analytical accounting of environmental assets. Sources of information when checking the analytical and synthetic accounting of environmental assets are: statements of analytical and synthetic accounting for accounts 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08, 20, 23, 25, 26, 58, 97, 98; the registers recommended by the author for the accounts: 97 "Expenses of future periods"; 019 "Long-term and short-term environmental assets"; "The register of current environmental assets"; inventory inventories; magazines - orders; references; Main book; surplus - balance balance, etc. The registers developed by the author ensure the completeness of the reflection of transactions with environmental assets by cycles and sub-cycles on analytical accounts. Segmented cycles, sub-cycles of audit, the proposed scheme for building accounting accounts on the basis of sub-accounts and analytical accounting accounts reconcile the accounting of environmental assets in relation to the accounts of environmental liabilities.

In conclusion, the turnovers on synthetic accounts are checked against the data of the General Ledger and the balance of payments. From the completeness of the reflection of information on transactions with environmental assets in the accounts of accounting depends reliability of reporting indicators.

The methodology for auditing transactions with environmental liabilities is developed on the basis of the author's version of the formation of the necessary information base in the system of accounting accounts. As noted, taking into account the cyclical approach, the audit methodology for transactions with environmental liabilities covers two cycles of management: nature management and nature protection activities and their sub-cycles that will contain various economic operations for long-term and short-term environmental liabilities, leading to their increase, reduction, repayment and use .

The cycle of nature management in the part of operations with environmental obligations of the audited entity includes sub-cycles by types of activity in the use of resources. This predetermines the following facts of economic activity as objects of audit:

- with long-term environmental obligations of nature management (for example: long-term credit and loan commitments for the purchase of equipment and installations for the use of water, subsoil, forests, vegetable and animal resources and various rights to them, borrowed sources of financing for nature use obligations (state support and non-repayable assistance); liabilities in terms of capitalized costs of environmental management resources, etc.): origination, reduction, use and repayment term environmental obligations of nature use.

- short-term environmental obligations of nature management (for example: short-term credit and loan commitments for the purchase of equipment and installations for the use of water, subsoil, forests, vegetable and animal resources and various rights to them, obligations in terms of current costs of environmental resources, reserves for environmental protection liabilities of nature use, short-term liabilities for natural resources use taxes, etc.): the occurrence, reduction, use and repayment term environmental obligations of nature use.

- with environmental obligations of nature management on off-balance accounting (for example: reserves for covering environmental obligations of nature use): receipt and disposal of environmental obligations of nature use.

The cycle of environmental activities of the entity being audited in terms of transactions with environmental obligations will contain sub-cycles, the following business transactions will be the objects of audit:

- Long-term environmental obligations of environmental activities (for example: long-term credit and loan commitments for the purchase of equipment and environmental protection measures that preempt or prevent environmental pollution and various rights to them, debt financing sources for environmental liabilities (state support and non-repayable assistance), commitments in terms of capitalized costs for environmental protection resources, etc.), the sub-cycle of environmental protection nye event: the appearance, reducing the use and repayment of long-term environmental liabilities environmental activities.

- short-term environmental obligations of environmental activities (for example: short-term credit and loan commitments for the purchase of equipment and environmental protection facilities and various rights to them, obligations in respect of running costs for environmental activities, reserves for environmental liabilities of environmental activities, short-term liabilities for environmental taxes activity, etc.), sub-cycle current environmental activities: occurrence, reduction, use use and repayment of short-term environmental liabilities of nature protection activities.

- with environmental obligations of environmental activities on off-balance sheet accounting (for example: reserves to cover environmental obligations for environmental protection activities and current environmental activities): receipt and disposal of environmental obligations of environmental activities.

At first, the contractual discipline on the environmental obligations of the entity being audited is studied with a view to establishing the nature and content of each contract. In this regard, the primary documents for recording transactions with environmental obligations of nature management and (or) environmental activities are analyzed. When verifying the calculations on the merits, information on the formation, reduction and repayment of environmental obligations of analytical accounting is compared with the concluded contracts and their annexes.

Sources of audit evidence for the creation, reduction and settlement of environmental liabilities are such primary documents as: invoices; commodity waybills; consignment notes; certificates of work performed; bank statements with attachments; incoming and outgoing cash orders; expense reports. Particular attention is drawn to the presence in the primary documents of blots, erasures, corrections to establish the reliability and absence of errors in the accounting registers for transactions with environmental obligations. It is necessary to check the actual observance of the calculations, their form, documenting and reflection on the accounts of accounting.

It is necessary to use information on studying the working chart of accounts of the entity being audited with the purpose of analyzing the system of analytical recording of environmental liabilities, when checking the analytical and synthetic accounting according to the registers, which reflect transactions with environmental obligations for cycles and sub-cycles. In order to provide information support for the audit, the author has developed and presented a detailed structuring of the reporting of data on obligations in the context of individual subaccounts "Environmental liabilities" and the individual analytical accounts that are opened for them in the context of types of obligations.

The sources of information when verifying the analytical and synthetic accounting of environmental liabilities are: registers of tax accounting; statements of analytical and synthetic accounting for accounts 60, 65, 66, 67, 68, 76, 98; the recommended form of the register for off-balance sheet account 020 "Reserves to cover environmental liabilities"; inventory inventories; magazines - orders; references; Main book; surplus - balance balance, etc. The completeness of the reflection of transactions with environmental obligations on cycles and sub-cycles in analytical accounts is progressively tested. For this purpose, the turnover data on the debit and credit of the correspondent accounts are checked, the initial and final balance, off-balance accounts. Particular attention is drawn to the period of occurrence and settlement of environmental obligations, as well as to the availability of lawsuits recognized for the receipt or payment of penalties under contracts and to the budget. By segmented cycles, sub-cycles of audit, proposed scheme of structure of accounting accounts on the basis of sub-accounts and analytical accounting accounts are subject to audit of accounting of environmental liabilities in relation to environmental accounting accounts.

In conclusion, the turnover on synthetic accounts is checked against the data of the General Ledger and the balance of payments. The presented author's variants of methods for auditing

environmental assets and liabilities [7, p. 63-75] allow to identify the completeness and reliability of information on transactions with them, affecting in general the reporting indicators of the entity being audited.

However, in order to identify significant distortions in the accounting (financial) reporting on transactions with environmental assets and liabilities, we consider it necessary to improve the procedures for their substantive review, examples of which are contained in the Application to the Rules of Auditing "Accounting for environmental issues in the audit of accounting (financial) statements". Resolution of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Belarus № 142 of 28.09.2004 [8]. Recommended additions to the procedures for verifying the substantive environmental issues of the organization on transactions with environmental assets and liabilities are grouped by section and contain verification of the author's proposed primary accounting documents and registers for transactions with environmental assets and liabilities.

## Conclusion

According to the results of the study, it can be concluded that the integrated use of developed methods for auditing environmental assets and liabilities, improving the list of substantive procedures will improve the quality of work of audit organizations, reliably assess the impact on environmental reporting of the entity being audited. All this will contribute to the expression of a reliable opinion of the auditor in the audit report.

A consistent set of control actions to audit transactions with environmental assets and liabilities forms a methodology aimed at testing the interconnected segments, thanks to which it is possible to obtain sufficient evidence. The proposed methods for auditing transactions with environmental assets and liabilities are a consistent set of control actions that provide sufficient evidence to establish the reliability of reporting data on environmental assets and liabilities of the audited organization and the expression of the professional opinion of the auditor.

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