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COASTAL ZONES OF MODERN RUSSIA: DELIMITATION, PARAMETRIZATION, IDENTIFICATION OF DETERMINANTS AND VECTORS OF EURASIAN DYNAMICS

ABSTRACT. The resource potential of the oceans has historically had a fundamental impact on the development and spatial organization of mankind. The role of the «marine factor» in economic activity and the formation of settlement systems has increased even more in the modern period, including in Russia, which has long sea coasts that fulfill the country's most important transport, communication, economic and resource, residential and military infrastructure functions. Since the mid-2000s, in Russia there has been a steady increase in foreign trade activity and the marine economy. The author summarizes and develops theoretical concepts created in Russian science about the functions, boundaries, structure of coastal zones as special geographical areas. Based on GIS analysis and the study of a vast array of demographic and economic statistics, the coastal zone of post-Soviet Russia was delimited. Particular attention is paid to the innovative potential of coastal zones, the features of its localization and formation. It is shown that coastal zones and large cities act as a significant environment for building cross-border interactions in the scientific and innovative sphere. The author argues that a further «shift to the sea» of economic activity and the population of Russia is inevitable. It is provoked by geo-economic and geopolitical changes in modern Eurasia which include the processes of integration and disintegration in the Baltic, Black Sea basin, and the Caspian region, the intensification of geopolitical rivalry in the Arctic, and implementation of the Chinese initiative «One Belt - one Road». However, the development of the country's coastal zones will be unstable, not universal and will be accompanied by a further concentration of socio-economic potential in the few leading coastal centers - St. Petersburg, Rostov-on-Don, Sochi, Vladivostok, Kaliningrad, Makhachkala, etc.

KEY WORDS: coastal zone, marine economy, socio-economic development, innovation, geoinformation analysis, Russia, Eurasia

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INTRODUCTION

Our Planet, primarily, is the vast, prevailing oceanic and sea areas – 71% of the entire earth's surface (Slevich 1988), encircling dispersedly localized disseminations of land massifs, which, in fact, are archipelagoes of «islands» of various configurations and sizes. An extremely long «junction» of land and sea (the total coastline of top-ten countries by this indicator is more than 460 thousand kilometers¹) appears in this context as the most important border, contact space on a planetary scale of a with a complex of specific factors and characteristics (including for men, their settlement, economic activity) and, at the same time, a key component of the territorial organization of society.

Coastal location has a universal impact on the spatial organization of economic activity, the localization of infrastructure and the distribution of settlement systems. The marine factor and the tendencies to concentration of the economy and the population on the sea and ocean coasts determine coastal zones as an acute issue for research. Scholars estimate that the worldwide population share living within the boundaries of a coastal zone is around 50-70% (Amos et al. 2013; Cetin et al. 2008; Cracknell 1999; El-Sabh et al. 1998; Kurt 2016; Pak and Majd 2011; Pernetta and Elder 1992; Turner et al.

1996). With that, great variations exist with regard to particular countries under study. In Australia, 83-85% of the population reside within 50 km of the coast (Jacobson et al. 2014; Lyth et al. 2005; Wang et al. 2011; Wescott 2009). Up to 75% of the total population of Mozambique (Ngoile et al. 1993) and 70% of Thailand (Tookwinas 1999) concentrate in the coastal areas. The eastern part of coastal China (Hindrichsen 1998; Wang et al. 2011) as well as the coastal zone of Indonesia (Siry 2007) account for 60% share of population. Approximately 55% of the population of Lebanon (Antipolis 2001) and 53% of population of the United States (Bulleri and Chapman 2010; Crowel et al., 2007; Lam et al. 2009) live in the coastal plains. Nearly 40% share of the total national population is found in Croatia and other Mediterranean region states (Bowen et al. 2006). A study held in the scope of Europe suggests that an average population share of coastal regions is 42% (Mikhaylov et al. 2018).

Despite of the coastal zone covering under 10% of the total land surface, it generates as much as 25% of global primary production and 43% of the total value of global ecosystem services (Costanza et al. 1997; Turner et al. 1996). In the United States, coastal counties comprise of 42% of the total employment and are among the nation's fastest growing (Beatley et al. 2002; Lam et al. 2009). In Europe, 43% of gross

¹ The top-20 countries of the world with the longest coastline URL: <https://geographyofrussia.com/20-stran-mira-s-samoj-protjazhennoj-beregovoj-liniej>

regional product (GRP) in purchasing power parity (PPP) is concentrated around coastal regions with the highest GRP (PPP) per sq.km – 2.3 million euro, adding up to 18 trillion Euro (Mikhaylov et al. 2018).

The specificity of coastal areas is fully manifested in Russia. The whole spatial dynamics of this country (originally «intracontinental»; Savitskiy 1997, it is perceived primarily as an «ocean of land»; Ilyin 1934, and for the last three centuries serving as one of the leading maritime powers; Druzhinin 2016a) is historically very closely associated with an «incrementation» and development of national coasts (Druzhinin 2017). Their geopolitical significance was fully appreciated already a century ago (Semenov Tyan Shanskiy 1915), and the natural-ecological and socio-economic specifics began to be steadily comprehend in the Russian scientific discourse since the early 1970s (in the wake of the intensive development of the geography of the World Ocean at that period; Salnikov 1984), being conceptualized in such invariant categories as «waterside zone» (Anikeev 2012; Aybulatov 1989), «littoral zone» (Fadeev 1998), «seaside territory» (Gogoberidze 2008; Makhnovsky 2014), «marine coast» (Arzamastsev 2009), «sea-land contact zone» (Dergachev 1980) and, finally, «coastal zone» (Bondarenko 1981). Nowadays, in the context of geo-economically and geopolitically motivated significant increase in the role of the «sea factor» for the Russian Federation and its spatial development (Druzhinin 2016a; Druzhinin 2019) the corresponding problem (finding an increasingly pronounced socio-geographical emphasis) again logically goes to the research forefront (Druzhinin 2016c; Fedorov et al. 2017). The purpose of the proposed article is the delimitation of Russian coastal zones based on GIS technologies, assessment of their positioning and «weight» in the socio-geographical structure of the country, as well as identification of trends in the socio-economic and demographic dynamics of coastal zones (in the macro-and meso-levels) in the geo-economic and geopolitical context of Eurasia.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Contemplating over the «coastal zone of Russia» as a socio-geographical category and its delimitation are associated with a number of conceptual points. The first is the inherent in the national scientific tradition considering «zone» as «one of the types of geographic taxon regions» (Gorkin 2013) and, accordingly, a specific territory «characterized by the presence and intensity of the phenomenon» (Alaev 1977). In the case of the actual seaside zone, the specificity of the territorial structures related to it (in the dual unity of their functionality and spatial localization) is predetermined by the boundary («joint») of the sea and the land, its natural-ecological, resource and other capabilities and properties.

The differences between estimated values within and between countries occur both due to objective factors – the established national settlement system, and subjective ones – the date of data collection, the source of data, the delimitation principles of the coastal zone. The first attempts to delimit coastal zones were made back in the 1950s by the Polish geographer I. Staszewski. His approaches were further developed by a Russian scholar V.V. Pokshishevsky and receiving a complex assessment in the cycle of publications by L.A. Bezrukov. The latter gave a quantitative assessment of the population distribution of Russia by the degree of remoteness from the sea and following the corresponding spatio-temporal trend. For example, a research design on the Pacific islands set the 1.5 km limit of width for defining the coastal zone (Mimura et al. 2007). A study of Pak and Farajzadeh (2007) on coastal management of Iran has considered 10 km bandwidth coastal zone of the Caspian Sea. Indian scholars

focus on a distance of 50 km from the coast (Qasim et al. 1988; Susanta 2013). The exponential increase in population share within a limited scope of the coastal area places a particular importance to the research period. The «coastal sprawl» (Beach 2002) that happens over the past few decades suggests a rapid change of the coastal environment and the community lifestyle. OECD (2003) recommendations state that boundaries of a coastal zone are mobile and should be defined with respect to economic and social characteristics associated with objectives of coastal management. In solidarity with this approach, we note that in Russian science, ideas about the «depth» (width) of the coastal zones (remoteness from the sea of their «intracontinental» border) vary over a very wide range (from 50 to 200 km; Salnikov 1984; Arzamastsev and Sorokin 2008) and are generally equivalent to the existing spheres «intracontinental» socio-economic dominance of coastal cities (or the boundaries of coastal urban agglomerations).

Being of predominantly a «strip-like» contour, the maritime zones appear, at the same time, as special *limological (boundary) structures* («small spaces that separate large spaces»; Rodoman 1999), and their combination is a borderland invariant, result of one of the many types of boundaries, being a «fundamental social phenomenon», as noted by the leading Russian limologist V.A. Kolosov (2018).

The coastal zones (and due to the continually discrete geographical existence in practice, it is the actual *multiplicity of the coastal zones* that takes place) are confined to the land-sea contact strip. Nevertheless, not every sea (oceanic) coast (especially in the Russian Arctic and the Far East) can be identified precisely as a «coastal zone», which is primarily a socio-geographical phenomenon, particularly being settled and economically developed as a result of involvement in specific (associated with the use of the «sea factor» in the economy, geopolitics, development of the residential environment) communications, relationships, processes. It is the latter that predetermine universal (but not ubiquitous) manifestations of the economy and the population attractiveness (sustainably emphasized by representatives of both Russian and foreign science; Pokshishevskiy 1982; Druzhinin 2017; Green 2009; Small and Nicholls 2003; Pak and Majd 2011), as well as the various institutional, economic, socio-cultural, spatial-planning and other effects associated with it.

Among them, the structural and functional specificity of the coastal zones (concentrating the main activity on the development of the resource potential of the World Ocean; Slevich 1988; Zalugin 1984; Pokshishevskiy 1982) is of paramount importance: the «biased» sectoral structure of the economy in favor of those directly connected with the sea, its resource capabilities and the transport and communicative properties of the types and spheres of management (sea ports, shipbuilding, extraction of marine bioresources, «seaside» recreation, etc.). This «bias» manifests itself both on the scale of the country. This enables us to identify «coastal regions» with the allocation of their two typological varieties: territories characterized by developed coastal zones (maritime) and other coastal areas (coastal) with the minimum influence of the sea factor on economic and residential patterns (Fig. 1).

It is at the municipal (local) level that the position-localization and economic characteristics of the coastal zones are organically combined with the organization of the space, with the culture of the marine economic activity, with a special «maritime» identity. This makes it possible, in particular, by identifying a very numerous grouping of coastal cities, coastal municipalities and coastal regions (prevailing in southern Russia and, even more in the north-west of the country, in the Baltic region – figure 2) in Russian conditions, to isolate in their aggregate the most important typological invariant – the «thalasso-centered» (Druzhinin 2016d) or «sea-oriented» (Druzhinin 2019) territories.



Fig. 1. «Maritime component» of the regional structure of the Russian Federation



Fig. 2. Coastal municipalities in the Russian sector of the Baltic Sea

The functionality of the coastal zones corresponds with their *localization*, confined directly to the sea coast (generating properties of borderland, interworlds, contrasting environment and requiring special geoadaptive approaches when solving economic, infrastructure, residential, environmental, defense and other tasks), as well as with *configuration features* predetermined physiographic (winding of the coastline, orography, etc.) and social conditions (economic potential and profile of coastal centers, transportation network scheme, delivery technology of passengers and cargo, etc.). The «sea orientation» is also projected on the *structural and spatial uniqueness* of the coastal zones: being a basic component of the territorial organization of society, they, in turn, represent their own spatial framework – the nodal centers of marine economic activity localized on the coast, as well as the intermodal communications ensuring their functioning (including the marine routes). The development of this framework (as well as in general), the positive dynamics of the coastal zones at the same time is directly predetermined by the marine (economic and geopolitical) interests of the country, the extent and scale of their implementation.

RESULTS

For modern Russia (located at a complex geo-economic and geopolitical «crossroads»), the role of the World Ocean, its resource potential (and, above all, communication, resource and military-strategic capabilities) is increasingly acute. Against this background, the significance of the coastal zone of the country rises, its polycentricity deepens, an intensive «stratification» of coastal territories is observed in terms of conditions, vectors and rates of socio-economic development.

In their overwhelming majority, the coastal zone of Russia is a narrow, winding and intermittent tape: almost 90% (36.8 of 41 thousand km) of the maritime borders of the Russian Federation extend along its Pacific and Arctic coasts, remote from the main centers of socio-economic activity, are weak developed (with the «island» nature of urbanization) and generally being unfavorable to human life in the natural-climatic relation (Fig. 3).

The situation is significantly different in the west and south-west (in the Black Sea and in the Baltic, where the «sea factor» is fully felt not only for coastal municipalities (in the Russian Federation as a whole, they account for 22.4% of the territory and 11.5% demographic potential; Druzhinin 2017), but also at the macro level: in the Southern Federal District, 67% of the population lives within 200 km of accessibility from the coast, and 96% live in the North-Western District. Due to natural and historical circumstances, the pronounced asymmetry of the Russian coastal zones along the south-west-northeast axis (in economic potential, demographic dynamics, and therefore in the width of the strike area) has steadily increased throughout the post-Soviet period. It is symptomatic that over the past three decades, out of 34 cities located on the Arctic and Pacific coasts of the country, only 4 showed positive demographic dynamics (Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, Naryan-Mar, Salekhard and Artyom).

The fragmented, non-universal «shift to the sea» of the economy and population (with the corresponding «expansion» and «compaction» of the coastal zones) almost completely corresponds to the geo-economic realities (including the successful arrangement of the most important transport and logistics corridors; Radvanyi 2017) and is accompanied by a concentration of population and socio-economic activity in the largest multifunctional coastal cities. So, in particular, in St. Petersburg for the post-Soviet period, the population «increased» by 530 thousand (or 11.3%), in Makhachkala – by 393 thousand (2.2 times), in Sochi – by 132 thousand (by 39%), in Rostov-on-Don – by 96 thousand (by 9.6%), Kaliningrad – by 52 thousand (13%). In general, currently 14 existing urban group settlement systems are functioning on the coasts of the Russian Federation, which differ in their demographic and economic «mass», spatial structure and functionality. The size of their population (including rural settlements in agglomeration) reaches a total of 15.5– 15.8 million people, which is equivalent to 92–93% of the total «coastal» population of Russia. Inherent in the coastal zones of the country, the hyper-urbanization and dominance of urban agglomerations, generating additional prerequisites for advancing socio-economic dynamics, simultaneously create a «dependency track» of increasing marine economic



Fig. 3. Coastal zone of Russia: identification and delimitation

activity (and, consequently, the further development of the entire coastal zone) on the infrastructure, investment and human resources of a few leading coastal centers, on their ability to take on the mission of borderland outposts, seaside «facades», to become the nodal elements of the «development corridors», as well as centers for generating and transferring various kinds of innovations.

Innovation activity has a clear polarization towards core regions and major urban agglomerations. These are the capital cities, leading financial and industrial centers, key logistic corridors where most activities of high added value concentrate. As is it noted by Turner et al. (1996), two-thirds of the largest cities of the world with population above 2.5 million inhabitants are coastal. Eight of the top ten largest cities are located at the coast (Reed 2010). The fundamental question is what are the determining factors for the ability of coastal zones to act as priority «platforms» of innovation activity, fostering generation and transfer of technological, industrial, institutional and other types of innovations.

Coastal cities and agglomerations are the natural gates for foreign direct investments (FDI) and knowledge exchange. In China, firms of the eastern provinces take advantage of active trans-aquatic trade and industrial plants of transnational corporations by using reverse engineering for products and technologies, knowledge spillover via labor turnovers, intensification of local R&D facilities (Cheung et al. 2004). An example of Quebec's coastal maritime industry suggests that innovation within a maritime sector spans across a broad range of marine-related activities, such as transportation, shipbuilding, equipment manufacturers, marine products, food industry, fishery and fish farming, etc. (Doloreux et al. 2008). With that, while marine activities are not solely based in coastal areas, the economies of the coastal regions are not limited to maritime sector (Morrissey et al. 2012). The regional innovation system of a coastal region should be considered from the lens of an enabling environment for cross-border, transnational and trans-aquatic cooperation. It has an important role of knowledge and innovation hub for multilateral transfer of resources (financial, intellectual,

human, information, etc.) and their absorption for the benefit of the local and national communities.

In the context of Russia, coastal regions are the crucial networking points with the global market. The western coasts are the cooperation bridges with the European Union member states and other European countries, while the eastern regions are naturally focused on Asia Pacific. The role of a «development corridor» (Fedorov 2010) played by the coastal regions is difficult to evaluate with respect to innovation dynamics, since they are not being necessarily utilized on spot (Mikhaylova 2019). One of the possible indicators is the level of research collaboration. Figure 4 presents data on the share of scholarly output implemented in international and inter-regional cooperation over the period of 2013-2017.

International collaboration serves as an indication of knowledge inflow and the degree of openness of the region to foreign counterparts. Inter-regional research networking shows the degree of knowledge transfer within the national innovation system, both affected by the institutional readiness and the relative value of the knowledge possessed. Of the top-10 regions by the share of publications implemented in international collaboration, eight are coastal: Leningrad region – 78.8%, Magadan region – 43.7%, Chukotka Autonomous District – 40.7%, St. Petersburg – 35.3%, Kaliningrad region – 34.8%, Republic of Crimea – 33.6%, Nenets Autonomous District – 33.3%, and Sakhalin region – 30.9%. Out of 22 coastal regions only six fall below the national average value of 19.1%: two at the Black Sea: Rostov region – 19.0% and Krasnodar region – 18.5%, one at the Okhotsk Sea: Khabarovsk Krai – 14.5%, and three at the Caspian Sea: Republic of Dagestan – 13.9%, Republic of Kalmykia – 13.6%, and Astrakhan region – 10.9%.

Data in inter-regional collaboration suggests that seven of the 22 regions are highly integrated in R&D with other Russian regions (with the regional average value of 23.0% publications). These are the Republic of Karelia – 40.5%, the Republic of Kalmykia – 34.8%, Primorsky Krai – 33.7%, Kaliningrad region – 33.4%, Arkhangelsk region – 25.1%,

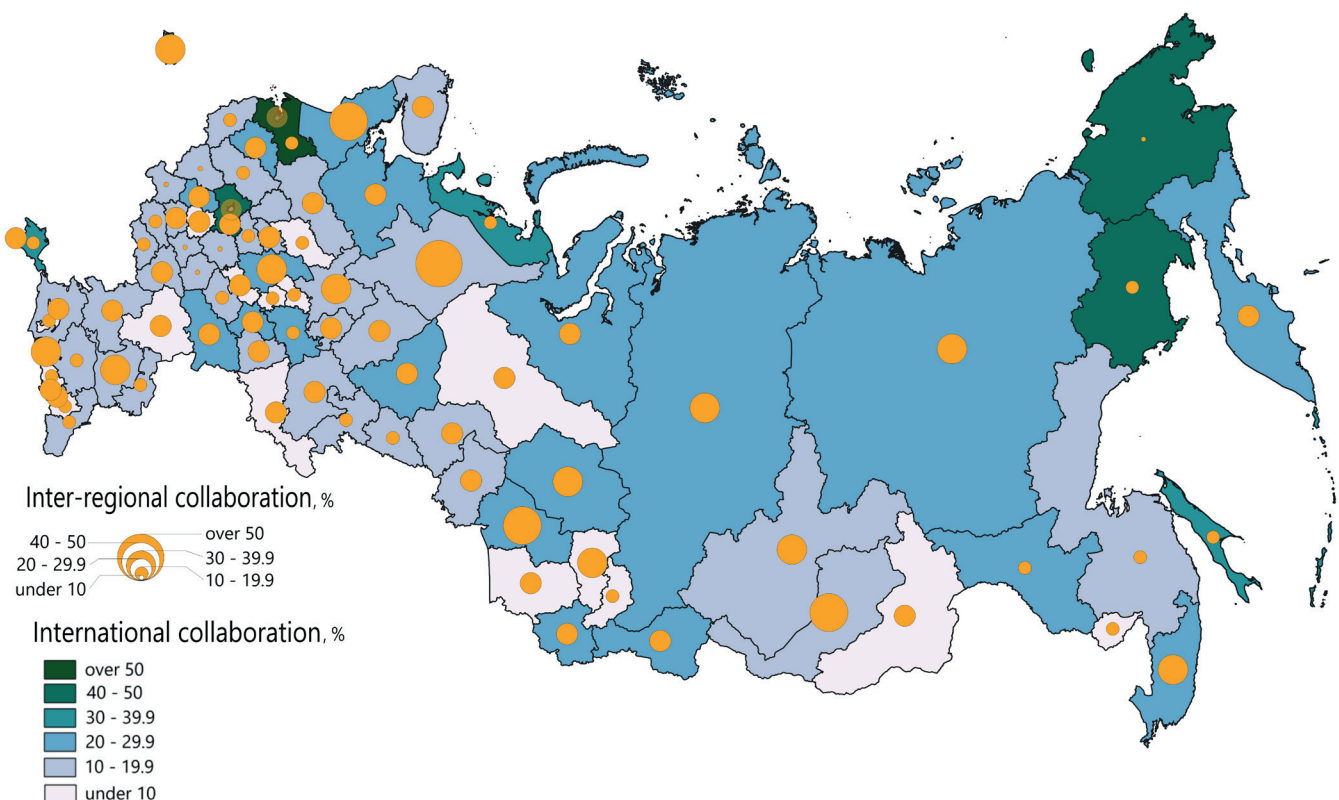


Fig. 4. International and inter-regional cooperation in research

Krasnodar Krai – 24.4%, and Rostov region – 23.7%. It is notable that some of these coastal regions underperform in international collaboration but are in the top-charts of inter-regional research collaboration. For instance, the republics of Karelia and Kalmykia, as well as Primorsky Krai are in the top-10 performers. In this regard, it is important to correlate the publication activity data with information on patents and advanced manufacturing technologies being generated and used.

Figures 5-6 illustrate the localization and weight of regions as divided by their core functions – knowledge-generating or knowledge-commercializing. The data on defragmentation of the national innovation system to generation and

commercialization of knowledge presented are the average values for 2013-2017 – identical to those acquired for publication activity window. The patents considered includes data on inventions, utility models, and industrial designs (Fig. 5).

Data suggests that coastal regions account for 17.8% of the total patents generated, with St. Petersburg exceeding the national average value. However, coastal territories show moderate performance with regard to commercialization dynamics. This pattern correlates with the one on research collaboration indicating strong capacity of knowledge generation, including the international spillover effect, and a knowledge transfer function within the national innovation system.

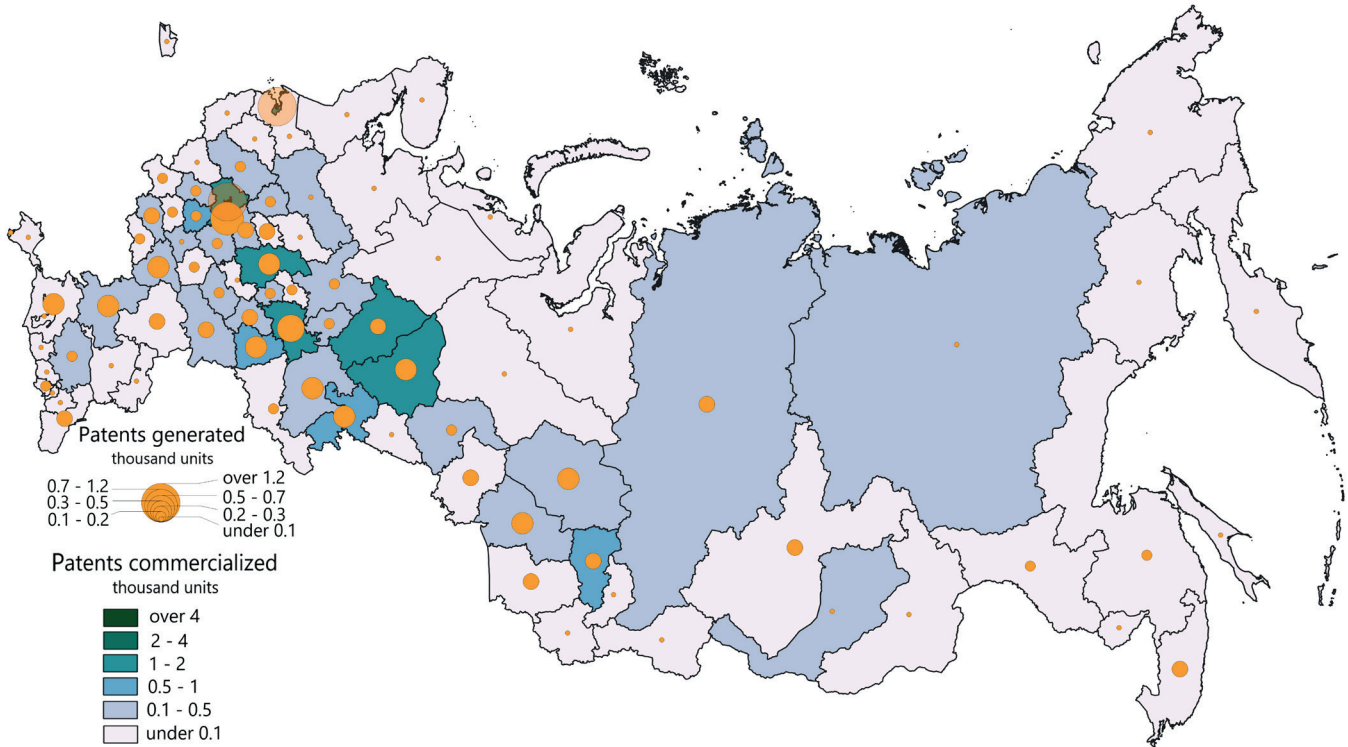


Fig. 5. The volume of patents generated and commercialized by regional innovation systems

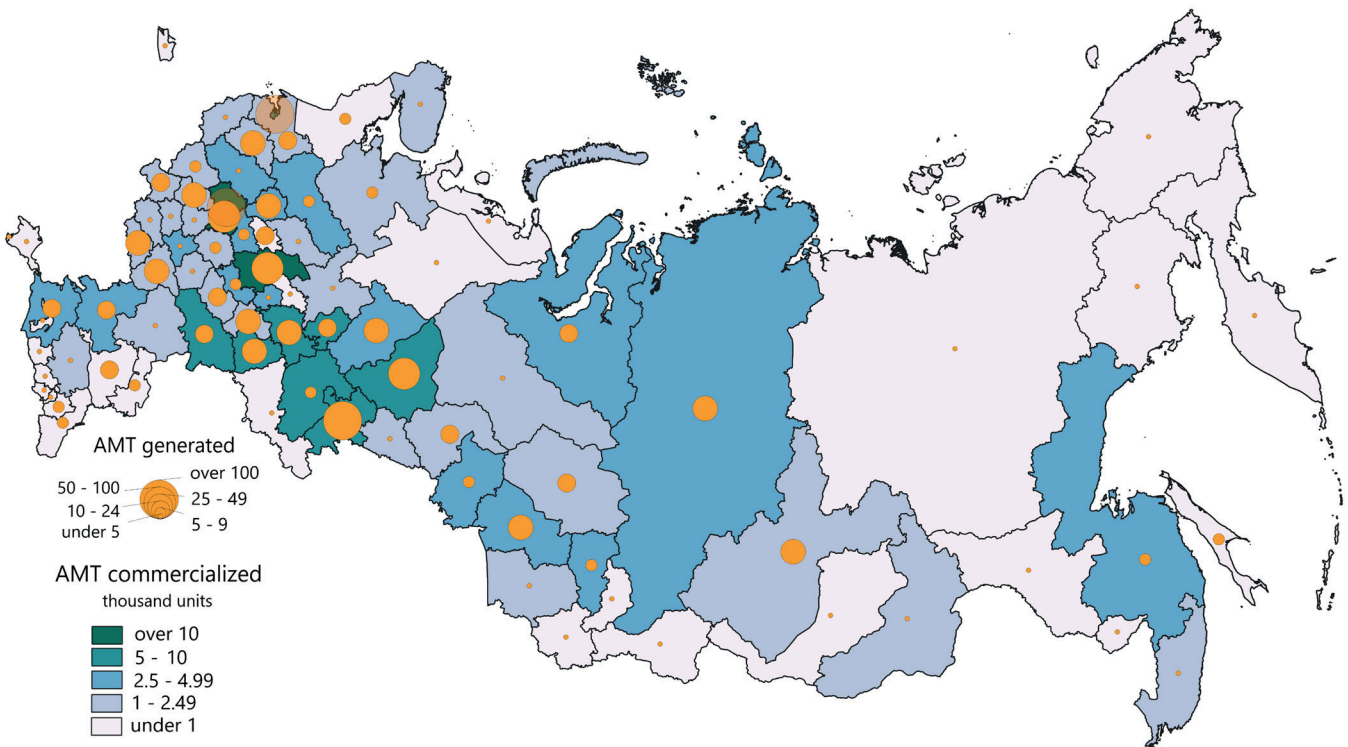


Fig. 6. The volume of advanced manufacturing technologies generated and commercialized by regional innovation systems

Data on the volume of advanced manufacturing technologies suggest that coastal regions implement higher volume of innovative technologies as compared to those generated. Moreover, apart from the industrial centers of the central Russia, coastal regions are among the top-performing territories nation-wide. Thus, the coastal zones of Russia not only occupy priority positions in the innovation space of the country, but also act as a significant environment for building cross-border interactions in the science and innovation sphere.

DISCUSSION

Formation of Russia, as noted by the eminent geographer, historian and ethnologist L.N. Gumilev (1989), is inextricably linked with the Eurasian continent, with its ethnocultural and socio-economic rhythm. This kind of «Eurasian determinant» of the development of our country was extremely bright and large-scale in the post-Soviet period, and especially from the «turning point» of 2013-2014, when the geopolitical confrontation in the Russia-West system was sharply manifested, and the southeast of the Eurasian continent began to move forward rapidly towards global proscenium (the new reality is increasingly being associated with the emergence of «Greater Eurasia»; Bordachev 2015), primarily China. It is this state (concentrating more than 18% of world GDP) that is currently the most important global actor in the field of port facilities and commercial shipping (Wang et al. 2018). The mega-project «One Belt - One Road» (一帶一路) promoted by the PRC creates a format both to consolidate this leadership (Liu 2015) and to turn the transport and logistics projects of the «Middle State» into the main determinant of maritime activity, including for Russia, giving new development impulses for its coastal areas.

It is symptomatic that, according to the Strategy for the Spatial Development of the Russian Federation until 2025, all 47 border (including coastal) regions are classified as «geostrategic territories». Acquiring a multi-vector nature in its foreign policy (Druzhinin 2016b), Russia is simultaneously steadily «turning to the sea» (Druzhinin 2019), which is predetermined not only by the growing demand of Eurasian states for the use of resource and raw materials (including the shelf zone) and transport and transit (with an emphasis on the Northern Sea Route) potential of the Russian Federation, but also by the increasing geopolitical turbulence and the need for Russia and its corporations to build «flexible» logistics schemes and economic partnerships with the main Eurasian «centers of power» (the EU, China, India, etc.), relying, first of all, on the developed system of seaports.

The trend for the entire post-Soviet period (in the logic of «Westernization» of foreign economic and humanitarian relations of the country (Vardomskiy 2017), which still retains its dominance and inertia) is the development of port complexes (with the centers of the port industry) in the Baltic and in the Black Sea region – in new geopolitical and geo-economic context is complemented by an intensive (especially after 2014) deployment of military infrastructure in the regions of Russian geostrategic interests (Kaliningrad region, Crimea, Kuriles, the Arctic zone, etc.), as well as «spot» promotion of economic activity in the coastal zones in the format of Eurasian partnerships (including the creation of 7 «coastal» Advanced Development Territories (ADT) in the regions of Pacific Russia and the ADT «Kaspiysk» in Dagestan). The «driver» of further «marine orientation» of the country is also the implementation of large international (in terms of the scale and structure of investments) projects for the extraction of hydrocarbons on the shelf, as well as the localization of complexes for the liquefaction and transportation of natural

gas in the coastal zones. As a result, while in the preceding post-Soviet decades, the dynamics of coastal zones was characterized mainly by a «shrinking concentration» on the main communication corridors (with an emphasis on the Baltic and Black Sea coast), in the modern time (increasingly clearly expressed) diversification of foreign economic relations of the Russian Federation and, accordingly, the inevitable activation of cross-border interactions throughout its external contour, is complemented by geopolitical motives and interests – creation of prerequisites for both social and economic «consolidation» of the coastal zones, and for their spatial «expansion», including the spread of their economic influence over the entire Russian coast. These processes correspond to the increasingly active inclusion of coastal zones in the processes of economic internationalization and cross-border regionalization.

The most complete and clear forms of aquatic transboundary regionalization are now found in the Baltic Sea (Druzhinin et al. 2018), where Russian geo-economic interests are focused, and the «Russian presence» in the coastal zone is equally significant (in the Baltic region as a whole, 16 million people are concentrated in the coastal metropolitan areas; 7.5 million – within the Russian Federation). In the post-Soviet period, its integration contour also revealed the Black Sea region (Dobransky 2013), characterized by socio-economic asymmetry (almost 70% of the population of the Black Sea cities now live in the «Turkish segment» of the coastal zone) and which became not only an acute geopolitical confrontation since 2014, but and the space for building economic interconnections that are significant for «Greater Eurasia» (mainly meridional orientation).

The megatrend of «marinization» of the spatial structure associated with aquatic regionogenesis will manifest itself, however, not only in the western border of the country but also practically along the entire perimeter of the Russian borders, and probably most dynamically in Pacific Russia (primarily within the Sea of Okhotsk and Japan; Baklanov 2018) and, of course, in the spaces of the Arctic (PRC symptomatically positions itself as a «near-arctic state»; Collins 2017). The potential of cross-border regionalization (with an emphasis on the energy resource sphere) also has the macro-region of the Caspian Sea «centered» on the Baku agglomeration.

CONCLUSIONS

In the structure of modern Russian space, coastal zones are among its significant and large-scale components. «Surrounding» the arrays of intracontinental territories (and in unity with them ensuring the integration of the country into world economic processes), creating prerequisites for the functioning of the «maritime economy» (and concentrating its most important service and production infrastructure elements), the coastal zones, at the same time, «attract» the population and predetermine the specifics of its settlement (spatial «pattern» of settlements, their functionality, dynamics), generating opportunities for cross-border and innovative activity.

The role of coastal zones (as a priority communication, resource, consumer and geostrategic territory) increases in the modern global and Eurasian context. The consonant with the growing «marine orientation» of Russia, the spatial «expansion» of the country's key segments of the coastal zones (and their spheres of influence), their economic and residential «condensation» (these processes are most noticeable in the Baltic and Black Sea regions, also manifesting in fragments in Pacific Russia and in the Arctic zone of the country) is combined with the ongoing

intensive «stratification» of coastal areas in terms of the level and pace of socio-economic dynamics. The development of coastal zones, their perspective, acquires an increasingly pronounced polyfactorness, multi-vectorness, demonstrates visible, growing differences «from place to place», allowing to consider this phenomenon as a priority object of socio-geographical analysis.

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