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INTERNATIONAL TRADE AS A PRACTICAL REALIZING FORM OF THE FOREIGN TRADING POTENTIAL OF OPEN ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

Abstract. The article proposes a view of international trade as a practical realizing form of the foreign trade potential of economic systems. The relevance of the study lies in the need to adapt foreign trade policy to modern global challenges and the associated changes in opportunities, limitations and conditions for self-realization and the implementation of effective international economic activity. The emphasis is on transformations and transitions "foreign trade potential (probabilistic, unmanifested) → international trade (manifested, commercialized, built into all phases of national reproduction) → self-development and self-reproduction of macroeconomic potential".

It is noted that today the functional purpose of international trade goes far beyond the "generic functions" determined by its essence and place in the global economic system and its market mechanism. It is proven that the multifunctionality of modern international trade is manifested through its performance of a complex of interrelated functions, such as: intermediary, transit, integrative, distributive, communicative, signaling, diagnostic, selective, health-improving, stimulating. As a carrier of a stimulating function, international trade acts as an important mechanism for strengthening the national reproductive potential and its foreign economic component, as a tool for increasing the efficiency of production and the solvency of the population, structural shifts, stimulating innovative activity, modernization of established models of international business.

It is argued that through the channels of international trade "external environment → open economic system" influences and signals of different orientations can come. They can adjust the course of the reproductive cycle, resource-nourish or deplete certain structural elements and through them activate transformation processes of a progressive or degrading nature, generate information noise and introduce moments of disorganization or ordering.

Keywords: foreign trade potential, international trade, export, import, open economic systems, national economy, global competition, international competitive advantages, trade policy.

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МІЖНАРОДНА ТОРГІВЛЯ ЯК ПРАКТИЧНА ФОРМА РЕАЛІЗАЦІЇ ЗОВНІШНЬОТОРГОВЕЛЬНОГО ПОТЕНЦІАЛУ ВІДКРИТИХ ЕКОНОМІЧНИХ СИСТЕМ

Анотація. У статті запропоновано погляд на міжнародну торгівлю як практичну форму реалізації зовнішньоторговельного потенціалу відкритих економічних систем. Актуальність дослідження полягає в необхідності адаптації зовнішньоторговельної політики до сучасних глобальних викликів та пов'язаних із ними змінами можливостей, обмежень і умов провадження ефективної міжнародної економічної діяльності. Акцент зроблено на трансформаціях і переходах «зовнішньоторговельний потенціал (імовірнісне, непроявлене) → міжнародна торгівля (проявлене, комерціалізоване, убудоване в усі фази національного відтворення) → економічна динаміка, саморозвиток та самовідтворення макроекономічного потенціалу».

Відзначено, що в сьогоденні функціональне призначення міжнародної торгівлі виходить далеко за межі «родових функцій», обумовлених її сутністю і місцем у глобальній економічній системі та її ринковому механізмі. Доведено, що мультифункціональність сучасної міжнародної торгівлі проявляється через виконання нею комплексу взаємопов'язаних функцій, як-от: посередницька, транзитна, інтегративна, розподільна, комунікативна, сигнальна, діагностична, селективна, оздоровча, стимулююча. Як носій стимулюючої функції міжнародна торгівля виступає важливим механізмом зміцнення національного відтворювального потенціалу та його зовнішньоекономічної складової, інструментом підвищення ефективності виробництва та платоспроможності населення, структурних зрушень, стимулювання інноваційної активності, модернізації усталених моделей міжнародного бізнесу тощо.

Аргументовано, що через канали міжнародної торгівлі «зовнішнє середовище → відкрита економічна система» можуть надходити впливи та сигнали різної спрямованості. Вони можуть коригувати перебіг відтворювальну циклу, ресурсно підживлювати або виснажувати певні структурні елементи й через них активізувати трансформаційні процеси прогресивного чи деградаційного характеру, генерувати інформаційний шум й вносити моменти дезорганізації чи впорядкування.

Ключові слова: зовнішньоторговельний потенціал, міжнародна торгівля, експорт, імпорт, відкриті економічні системи, національна економіка, глобальна конкуренція, міжнародні конкурентні переваги, торгова політика.

Statement of the problem. The beginning of the new millennium has enriched human history not only with new technological opportunities, meanings and vectors of development, but also with powerful threats and challenges that are critical for the future. The contradictory progress of globalization, the destruction of global security mechanisms, the formation of a multipolar economic geography model, the technological innovations of Industry 4.0 and many other related and derivative impact factors are shaping a new "opportunities' window" for the development of national economies [1]. At the same time, a multitude of restrictions and degrees of freedom for their self-reproduction and self-development on a global scale are being updated.

Ukraine, which currently finds itself at the epicenter of political and economic tension, on the front line of resistance to the escalation of totalitarianism and in a zone of cascading bifurcations, has expanded prospects for future self-realization in the global economic space, particularly in its EU region. A prerequisite for successful integration into the global network of economic relations is research based on modern scientific foundations to identify the principles of development, disclosure and commercialization of existing foreign economic macro-potential, primarily its trade component.

Analysis of recent studies and publications. It should be noted that a wide range of issues related to international trade, its drivers and determinants of development, geographical configurations and commodity profile, and modern smart technologies, digital and competitive modifiers of trading business models has already been reflected in the scientific research of many domestic and foreign scientists. Among domestic scientists, a significant contribution to the study of the latest trends in the conduct and development of international trade in the context of global hypercompetition, world market structural shifts and neo-protectionism ideology belongs to I. Havryliuk, R. Lupak, V. Lypov, A. Mazaraki, T. Melnyk, T. Ostashko, E. Pahucha, L. Shevchenko, T. Semenova, V. Venher, O. Zavhorodnia etc.

An analysis of the results already obtained allows us to conclude that, regardless of the scope and level of scientific development of this problem, its individual aspects require further research. First of all, we are talking about the expediency of bringing scientific research into the interdisciplinary space, considering international trade in a broader context, as a practical form of realizing reproductive potential, a factor in the dynamics of open macroeconomic systems, and an important tool for implementing national development strategies.

The purpose of the article is to study and determine the minimum necessary prerequisites for the realizations of the foreign trade potential of the national economy, its transition from a state of probable unexpressed passive to expressed commercialized active – the direct participation of the country and its economic entities in international trade.

Presentation of the main research material. In contemporary economic science, the understanding of foreign trade potential as an attributive dynamic property of any open macroeconomic system has been formed and established, which generally characterizes the ability of its economic entities to conduct and develop foreign trade. Depending on its power, it determines the possibilities of the carrier system's movement in the space of permissible states, conditioned by existing production and technological self-restrictions and numerous interactions between the "system ↔ global market environment", its ability to maintain self-reproduction and ensure self-development through connection to the system of international trade relations and the corresponding metabolism. The conductor of modification signals is export-import flows, which, in volumes that are significant on a global or regional scale, can influence demand (imports) or supply (exports) in the relevant markets and initiate derivative market price fluctuations and structural shifts.

The research conducted allows us to identify the main critical prerequisites for the transition of the foreign trade potential from a state of probable unmanifested passivity to manifested activity – direct participation in international trade as a subject of foreign trade relations and foreign economic activity.

It should be added that within the framework of modern systems theory and systems analysis, relations and interactions are considered as a special form of structural interrelationships that embody and characterize the various interdependencies of the elements of the system [2, p. 69-71]. Through participation in economic relations, economic actors realize and express themselves, demonstrate their attitude to their environment, and present their own qualities (properties, competencies, monopoly and comparative advantages), intentions and interests to it. Interests, in turn, are a prerequisite for inter-element indifference, an indication of possible common points of contact – the needs and interests of potentially mutually interested elements, a reason for establishing relationships – contacts and communications, directions and forms of further interaction. And, as is well known, the procedural basis for economic interactions is economic activity. Therefore, conscious, purposeful, real, concrete interactions in the field of international trade are possible only within the framework of an already established network of foreign trade relations, between the nodes of which mutual interest arises. Competitive interactions will be formed on the basis of confrontational interest, and partnership and cooperation interactions will be formed on the basis of mutual benefit. The latter, as they become more stable, coordinated and interdependent, will be modified into collaborative and symbiotic interactions.

As is well known, trade encompasses a multitude of organizational relations in the sphere of exchange and commodity circulation related to removal from the sphere of production, spatial movement, delivery to the consumer and the realizations of commodity flows, as a result of which the ownership of the object of trade is transferred from the seller to the buyer and the commodity form of value is simultaneously converted into monetary value (exceptions – barter, re-export, re-import) [3-4]. The vast majority of these transformations are carried out on a competitive and paid basis. It is clear that in the case of international trade, the defining features of such commodity movement are the legal affiliation of counterparties to different national economic systems, the cross-border nature and the relatively longer territorial distance between the initial and final links in the trade chain.

The motivation of international trade entities is based on profit, which is based on the more productive and profitable use of highly specialized factors of production and gains in the difference in price ratios for commodity products on domestic and foreign markets. For an importer, the indicator of the feasibility of foreign economic activity is the opportunity to buy cheaper, and for an exporter, it is the opportunity to sell more expensively. It is assumed that the transaction price reflects not only its cost component, but also the difference in the perceived value of the consumer value of a particular trade item in different countries and regions.

At the macro level, the implementation and commercialization of foreign trade potential through foreign trade requires its adequacy to those locations in the global market environment that correspond to the country's place in the structure of international labour specialization and/or fall within the zone of their strategic interests, in particular in the field of national economic security, geopolitical and geo-economic integration priorities [5-6]. This refers to the simultaneous opportunity, interest and readiness of domestic economic entities, on the one hand, to produce competitive trade items – carriers of value and worth (a prerequisite for export) – based on the available resource and technological base. On the other hand, it is about selectively attracting external resource and commodity flows into the domestic circulation, combining them with own resources, and fully or partially appropriating the results of their use and commercialization (a prerequisite for imports). A derivative consequence is the ability of the national foreign economic sector to satisfy demand and/or supply in specific commodity segments and regional niches of the world market. With regard to exports and imports, the term "satisfy" essentially means not only the compliance of the export or import basket with the demands of buyers/sellers, but also the timely provision/receipt of a range of complementary services and infrastructure, such as:

- foreign currency commercial settlements and servicing of foreign currency accounts, modern diversified forms of commodity credit provision;
- professional consulting, in particular on issues of state regulation of international trade operations, legal support and mediation in the preparation of permits;
- customs matters and customs brokerage;
- developed trade intermediation and commodity promotion based on digital trading platforms [8-9];

- logistics and transportation, high-speed transport routes with access to international cargo transshipment hubs, sea and ocean ports;
- cargo and vehicle insurance;
- warranty and post-warranty service;
- nationally oriented marketing, advertising and branding "Made in...", formation of a positive image of domestic business and business environment,
- appropriate resource provision, etc.

Another prerequisite for realizing foreign trade macro-potential is national subject-centeredness, economic activism and patriotism [1, p.29] in the implementation of competition and trade policy [10-11], primarily in terms of choosing national strategic priorities for growth and strengthening relevant competitive advantages [12].

The real, rather than declarative, sovereignty of the macro-system in determining the forms and options for its integration into the global economic space, in particular its trade sphere, as well as the implementation of foreign economic trade policy, is significant. Within the latter, it is important to view foreign trade potential as a factor in the national economic growth model, an effective instrumental component of the national development strategy, whose role is significantly increasing as globalization processes intensify. The relevant context for the development and adoption of management decisions requires an understanding of the multifunctionality and multiplicity of the consequences of international trade [3; 5-6], which manifest themselves and unfold in the economic, social and cultural dimensions of social life.

A thorough study and analysis of professional scientific and educational literature [13-14], economic realities allow us to assert that today the functional purpose of international trade goes far beyond the so-called "generic functions" determined by its essence, content and place in the global economic system and its market mechanism (Table 1).

The multifunctionality of modern international trade is manifested through its performance of a complex of interrelated functions, such as:

- *communicative:* moderation and establishment of communications between sellers and buyers, in which, through the exchange of relevant advertising and commercial information, the expectations, requests, preferences and real interests of counterparties are clarified and given substantive specificity;
- *intermediary:* mediation and optimization of interaction between producers (sellers) and consumers (buyers), coordination of their economic interests;

Table 1

Functions, potential advantages and benefits of international trade as a practical realizing form of foreign trade potential

Economic functions		
• transit; • integrative; • intermediary;	• distributive; • communicative; • signaling&diagnostic;	• selective; • health-improving; • stimulating
Advantages and benefits (macro level):		
➢ **a means (instrument) for implementing the national development strategy and foreign policy objectives, strengthening foreign economic security;** ➢ a means of developing production specialization, improving specialized competencies, realizing existing and creating new international competitive advantages for the national economy and its economic entities [10-11]; ➢ a means of increasing consumption and exceeding production capacity due to more favorable exchange ratios on international markets; ➢ a means of influencing the domestic market situation and overcoming reproductive imbalances between domestic production (supply through imports) and domestic consumption (demand through exports), achieving and maintaining a dynamic internal macrobalance by correcting the mutual influences of "system ↔ environment"; ➢ a means of international movement of commodity flows, which partially reduces the spatial and territorial unevenness of access of regions and countries to certain consumer goods; ➢ a means of expanding the scope of social and environmental responsibility of business and promoting environmentally friendly consumption standards; ➢ a means of additional filling the state budget through customs duties and taxation of export and import operations.		
Advantages and benefits (micro level):		
Producers: a means of increasing productivity and labour efficiency, profitability of economic activity (producer rent), minimizing the effects of seasonal fluctuations in supply and demand in the domestic market.		
Advantages:	**Exporters**	**Importers**
• more productive (profitable) use of highly specialized factors of production	+	+
• reduction in time and circulation costs, acceleration of capital turnover, increase in gross profit	+	+
• attracting additional investments in export-oriented or import-dependent production, increasing profitability and reducing the payback period of capital investments	+	+
• increasing profitability by saving on price differences, reducing total, average and marginal production costs		+
• reducing average fixed costs and production costs as a result of economies of scale through expanding the consumer base	+	
• expanding the sphere of influence, approaching external commodity markets, the capacity of which is growing, obtaining certain preferences in the struggle for them	+	
• increase in revenue due to the difference in product sales prices on domestic and foreign markets	+	
• sale of products that are surplus to the domestic market in conditions of large-scale production	+	
• overcoming the shortage (deficit) of resources		+

• the possibility of minimizing environmental costs and saving non-renewable natural resources		+
Consumers of imported products: • a means of increasing the level of satisfaction of individual, collective and social needs, in particular by increasing the level of accessibility of goods, their diversity (consumer rent); • reducing the time consumers spend on purchasing goods and services, promoting the rational use of time; • cultivating the aesthetic tastes of the population through advertising the consumer properties of goods and selling high-quality goods, focusing on compliance with standards of healthy lifestyles and consumer safety.		
Traders: the main form of existence and conduct of entrepreneurial activity in international business.		

Aggregated and systematized by the author using [3-4; 9; 13-14].

- *integrative:* 1) integration through interactive feedback loops of all phases of the open reproduction cycle, servicing commodity-money exchange, in the process of which production costs are compensated as a prerequisite for the reproduction of the aggregate social product and the recursion "production → consumption → production"; 2) expansion of contacts between industries, sectors or regions, strengthening of interdependence and connectivity between them as a factor in the course of global integration processes;
- *distributive:* 1) distribution of income (revenue) with subsequent redistribution and relocation of factors of production, reorientation under the influence of international competition of relevant resource flows from less productive companies and types of economic activity to more efficient and profitable ones; 2) final distribution of consumer goods in accordance with the monetary income of households as a basic component of the standard of living;
- *regulatory* (as a component of competitive market self-regulation): iterative balancing and maintaining a balance between production and consumption, supply and demand;
- *signaling:* dissemination, through a system of price indicators and dynamic price series, of signals regarding the intensity of competition, existing disparities and imbalances between production and consumption of certain products, navigation in the global market space of unmet needs and opportunities, the emergence of promising areas of development and structural shifts;
- *diagnostic:* diagnosis and determination of the adequacy of the existing foreign trade potential to the environment in which it is implemented, and, if inadequacy is identified, SWOT indication of its possible causes;
- *selective:* 1) competitive selection of manufacturers/sellers based on criteria of profitability (a stimulus marker for investors), competitiveness, adaptability and innovation [15]; 2) selection, segmentation and differentiation of consumers/buyers according to criteria of solvency and specific needs;
- *recovery* (as a derivative of the selective function): pushing the least effective and uncompetitive firms out of the market and/or pushing them towards a trajectory of innovative development – introducing technological and product innovations,

modernizing and digitizing business processes, or even radically changing their business model or area of specialization;

• *stimulating:* 1) actively influencing production in terms of product volume and range, stimulating the innovative and marketing activity of manufacturers and traders; 2) identifying unconscious and hidden needs, responding preventively to changes in consumer demands and preferences; 3) interaction with the spheres of production and consumption, expansion of inter-sectoral and interregional exchange, development of national, regional and global trade networks and their infrastructure support (self-organization and self-development)[8]; 4) modernizing established approaches to international business and its trade component, creating new standards and improving the culture of consumption, expanding the scope of social and environmental responsibility of business [15], etc.

In addition to the above-mentioned functions and consequences of international trade, summarized in Table 1, it is necessary to take into account its direct and indirect links with all stages of global and national reproduction, the circulation of social product and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) dynamics. On a global scale, the corresponding close interconnection (Fig. 1) is confirmed by the correlation coefficients between the percentage growth rates of world GDP and the dynamics of exports and imports (Table 1) calculated for the period 1971-2024.

This isn't surprising, given that over the past 50 years, international trade volumes in absolute and relative terms have shown a steady upward trend (Fig. 2) and will reach $63.62 trillion in 2024, including exports of $32.3 trillion and imports of $31.32 trillion), which corresponds to 57.2%, 29.04% and 28.16% of global GDP [17]. In other words, more than half of the movement of global GDP from production to consumption takes place in the form of international flows of goods and services.

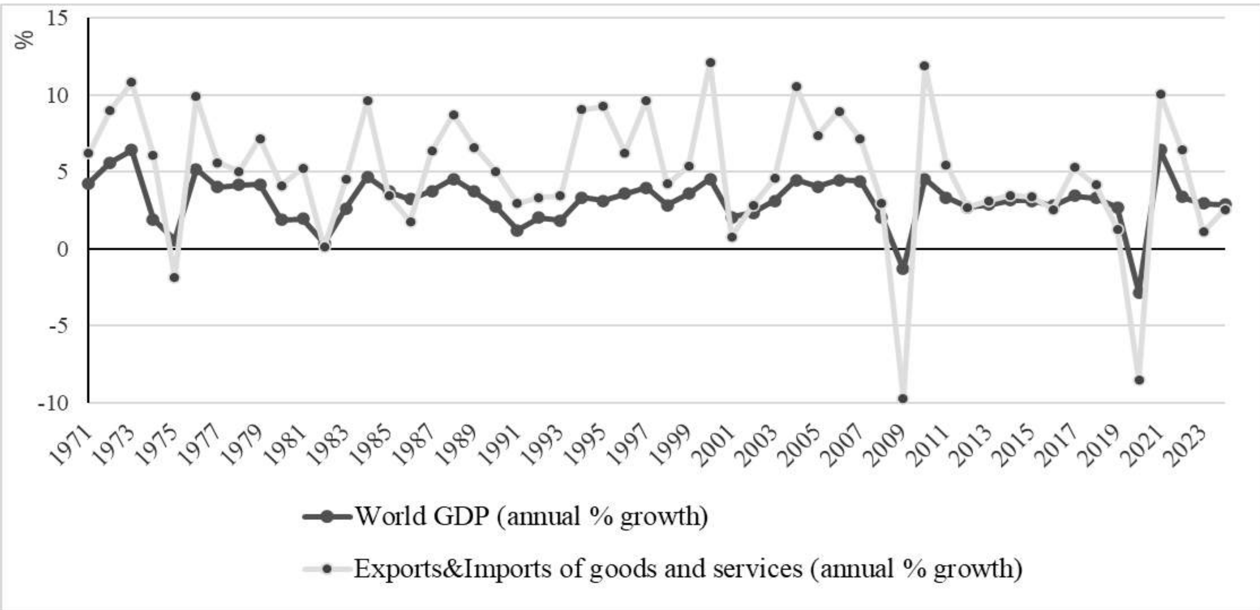

Figure 1. World GDP dynamics and international trade dynamics, 1971-2024 [17].

Table 2

Correlation coefficients (R^W) between global GDP dynamics and dynamics of international trade volumes, 1971–2024

Time period	$R^W_{GDP\_export}$	$R^W_{GDP\_import}$	$R^W_{GDP\_export\&import}$
1971-2024	0,87539	0,84753	0,75318
1975-1985	0,88883	0,73364	0,59170
1980-1990	0,73967	0,72339	0,47546
1995-2005	0,90199	0,91499	0,54859
2000-2010	0,97902	0,98088	0,89605
2005-2015	0,95434	0,97833	0,69280
2010-2020	0,97918	0,92484	0,73678
2015-2024	0,95678	0,96424	0,81162

Calculated by the author based on data from [17].

As for individual national economies, they are exposed through international trade channels to the "global environment {{individual and collective trading partners as stakeholders and actors maximizing their own benefits and minimizing their own costs and losses}, {global and regional markets as generators of competitive challenges, price fluctuations and shocks}} → macrosystem" may receive influences and signals of various directions. They can accelerate or slow down internal processes and the course of the reproduction cycle, resource-feed or deplete certain structural framework elements and, through them, activate transformational processes of a progressive or degradative nature, generate information noise and introduce moments of disorganization or reorganization.

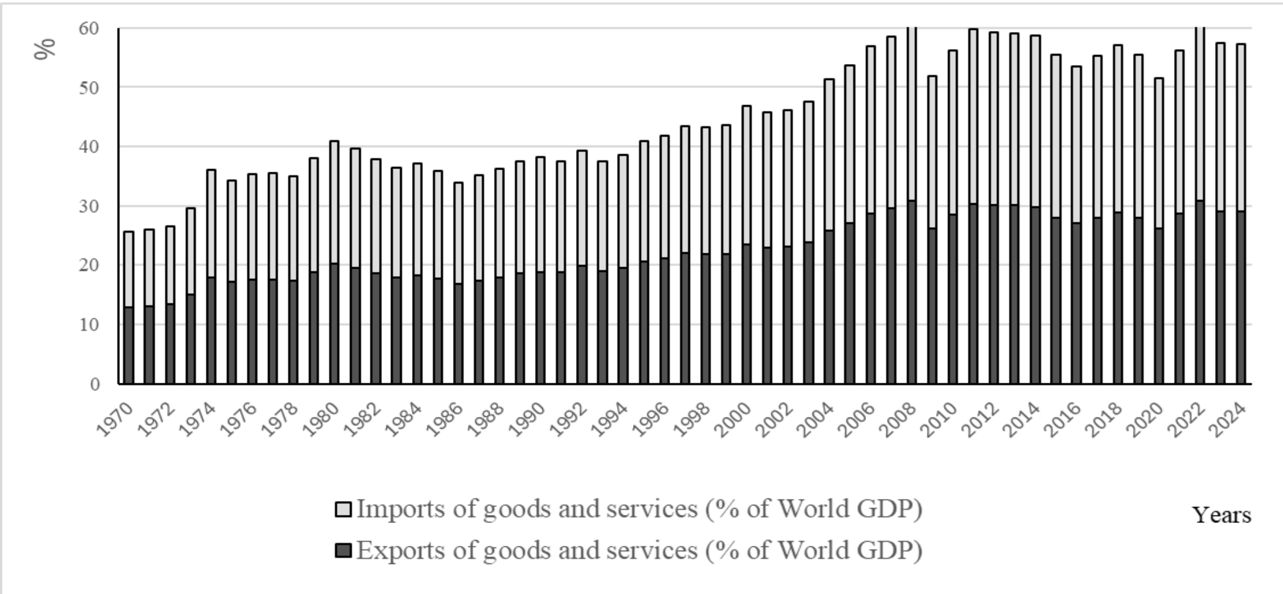

Figure 2. Dynamics of the share of international trade in global GDP (%), 1970-2025 [17].

Conclusions. Summarizing all of the above, we can draw relevant conclusions and generalizations of a theoretical and applied nature.

International trade is a recognized driver of economic growth and a catalyst for socio-economic development. The realization of foreign trade potential through export and import operations stimulates more efficient use of domestic resources, and national residents are able to meet their needs for raw materials, capital and consumer goods, and technologies that are not produced by local enterprises or are produced at high cost, and to increase production in line with global market demand for goods in which they have a comparative advantage of specialization.

The development and implementation of the national foreign trade potential are based on the ability and readiness of the national economy and its economic entities to produce competitive products based on existing comparative competitive advantages, capable of successfully overcoming environmental resistance when entering the global market and competing with imports in domestic markets.

When developing management decisions on trade policy, it is necessary to take into account the direct and indirect links between international trade and all stages of national reproduction, the circulation of social product and GDP dynamics. The relevant context requires an understanding of the multifunctionality and multiplicity of the consequences of foreign trade operations, which, as globalization intensifies, are becoming increasingly apparent and manifesting themselves in the economic, social and cultural spheres of society's life.

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