

Education for Sustainable Development: Russian-Swedish Project

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Lomonosov's anniversary

November 19, 2011 marked the 300th anniversary of Mikhail Lomonosov, the outstanding Russian scientist, whose name in Russia is seen alongside Leonardo da Vinci, Newton, Galileo, Goethe, Mendeleev, Vernadsky ... This event was widely celebrated across the country. The main centers of the anniversary celebrations were Moscow, St. Petersburg, Arkhangelsk and Kholmogory in the Arkhangelsk region.



To Russians M. Lomonosov is a writer - poet and playwright, scholar and lexicographer, the first Russian academician, educator, creator of the first Russian university, statesman and patriot.

But above all he is the founder of Russian science, the most significant figure in its history and of unsurpassed importance when it comes to his contributions to chemistry, physics, geology, astronomy, geography, history, demography, philology, ...

It is difficult to enumerate Lomonosov's vast scientific achievements, but the main ones are: the discovery of the law of conservation of matter, the development of the corpuscular theory, the explanation of the nature of lightning and northern lights, numerous works on stratigraphy, the origins of minerals and other geology issues, the development of ice classification, the explanation of the physical nature of celestial bodies - the Sun, planets, etc., works on the history of Russia and its demographics, works on Russian grammar, rhetoric and prosody, and more.

Lomonosov laid the foundation for Russian scientific terminology and coined many scientific terms: *earth's axis, specific weight, the balance of bodies, air pump*, etc. He was the first to begin to lecture in Russian and the first to write scientific works in Russian. It was he who implemented the synthesis of European scientific thought, culture and enlightenment with the fundamentals of Russian national culture and orthodox traditions.



MV Lomonosov was born and raised in a Pomor family in the Russian North. The picture shows a historical restoration of Kholmogory - Lomonosov's home and for centuries the political and cultural center of northern Russia. He knew the Russian north perfectly and loved it passionately. It is no accident, apparently, that it is he who authored the great vision: **"The power of Russia will grow through Siberia and the Northern Ocean ... "**

During the celebrations, the words of the greatest Russian poet, A. Pushkin, about Lomonosov were repeatedly recalled: *"Lomonosov was a great man. Between Peter I and Catherine II, he is the one distinctive collaborator of education. ... He created the first university. He, one should rather say, was himself our first university."*



Two universities in Russia carry Lomonosov's name - Moscow University, Russia's first, created directly by M. Lomonosov, and in Arkhangelsk - the Northern (Arctic) Federal University.

During the festivities the rector of Moscow State University named after MV Lomonosov, Academician V. Sadovnichy, said: *"In Lomonosov was embodied all the power of the national genius: a strong mind, a versatile talent, a powerful character, strong moral foundations and deep patriotism. All this, together with Lomonosov's designs for the Moscow University, became its foundation and the fertile ground that nourishes the Russian higher education, which has confirmed the authority of the Moscow State University, and given Russia world-wide recognition"*.

Source: Own information

International forum "Gas of Russia-2011"

On November 16, 2011 the IX International Forum "Gas of Russia-2011" was held in Moscow under the chairmanship of the Deputy Chairman of the State Duma, the President of the Russian Gas Society **Valery Yazev**. Speaking of trends in the Russian and world markets of natural gas, V. Yazev drew attention to the rise in energy prices to sustainable levels, the increasing competition between producers of natural gas, and the increased focus of the global gas business to implement projects in oil, gas and gas condensate on the Russian shelf.

Among the priorities of the gas industry in 2012, Valery Yazev mentioned the need for a regulatory framework to ensure the economic viability of hydrocarbons production in the Russian Arctic shelf; new

centers of gas production and gas products in the Far East and Eastern Siberia, and the implementation of projects on innovative use of natural gas.

"By 2030, Russia will remain the leading producer and consumer of gas in the world, but it will have to obtain this place on the European and Asia-Pacific markets in circumstances of tough competition and lowered unit costs for production and transportation", says Valery Yazev. At the same time, he believes that "our main strategy is to strive to enhance the efficient consumption, processing and use of gas and gas products in our own country, making it rich and successful."

Source: Office of Public Relations and Media Relations of the State Duma

Public council at Russia's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

At the end of November this year the Public Council under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation was established. The Council is a standing advisory body that provides interaction between the Ministry and the civil society.

Among the main functions of the Council is the preparation of recommendations for improving federal legislation in the field of ecology and efficiency in the area of environmental protection. In addition, the Council prepares proposals on target programs, national and regional projects being developed, as well as proposals on joint actions of public associations, academic institutions and the media on environmental matters."

The Council's annual work plan is approved by the Chairman of the Council and agreed with the management of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. Council meetings will be held at least twice a year. Decisions are made by open majority vote and are advisory in nature. The Council consists of experts in the field of environmental management, environmental protection, and representatives of environmental organizations. In particular, in the Council's work participate representatives of the Public Chamber of Russia, Greenpeace Russia, WWF Russia, the Public Fund "Citizen", Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russian Academy of Sciences, Gubkin Oil and Gas University and others.

Source: Press Service of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation

The Arctic: Improving the legislation

On November 23 a working meeting took place between the Deputy Chairman of the State Duma **Valery Yazev** and the Federation Council Chairman **Valentina Matvienko**, dedicated to the improvement of legislation in the sphere of development in the Arctic. According to both parties, the problems of development of the northern territories is a major task of the state. In particular, there is an apparent need to analyze the existing legal framework and to make appropriate additions, which would solve many problems of socio-economic development in this region, so promising for Russia.

V. Yazev told the new President of the Federation Council on the implementation of new major projects in the Murmansk region. In particular, the modernization and reconstruction of the Murmansk transport hub, the construction of an oil refinery on the Kola Peninsula, the Shtokman field and others. Implementing these projects is, the deputy is convinced, will ensure sustainable economic development in the region, will allow to create modern social infrastructure and new jobs, and most importantly - improve the quality of life.

At the same time, V. Yazev outlined the existing problems in the region, especially regarding the social protection of northerners. Today, says Valery Yazev, it is necessary to fully restore northern benefits to the residents of the Murmansk region.

Source: Office of Public Relations and Media Relations of the State Duma

Prospects of Russia's joining the Espoo Convention

Russia's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment is planning to introduce a package of documents on Russia's accession to the Espoo Convention to the State Duma in 2012. This statement was made by the director of the Department of International Cooperation **Nuritdin Inamov** at the latest international consultation meeting with the leadership of the Espoo Convention secretariat that was held at the Ministry. The Ministry's work on Russia's joining the Espoo Convention is aimed at implementing the orders of the President of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Russian Federation.

During the meeting, experts discussed the practical aspects of implementing the provisions of the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Espoo European countries in general and Sweden and Finland in particular, issues of implementation these experiences by the Russian side. Possible measures to harmonize Russian and European environmental legislation were considered, as well as issues concerning the organization of the process of ratification by the Russian Federation. According to the Chief Officer of the Espoo Convention Secretariat **Nicholas Bonvoisin**, there are no particular problems on Russia's way to join the Espoo Convention.

N. Inamov noted that, despite the fact that the Convention has not yet been ratified, important work has already been done in accordance with it, for example, on the construction of the gas pipeline Nord Stream. After the adoption of the Convention, cooperation is primarily planned between Russia and neighboring countries in the Baltic and Black Sea. The event was attended by representatives of Russia's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, the Secretariat of the Convention of the United Nations Economic Commission for Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention), the Institute of Legislation and Comparative Jurisprudence under the Government of Russia, the environmental authorities of Finland and Sweden.

Source: Press Service of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation

Cooperation of the Russian Federation and UNEP

The draft agreement on cooperation between the Russian Government and UNEP was discussed at a working meeting in the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. The meeting was led by the Director of the Department of International Cooperation of the Ministry **Nuritdin Inamov** and the Acting Director of the Office of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) for Europe, **Jan Dusik**.

N. Inamov informed about the final approval of the Cooperation Agreement and the possibility of it being signed in January 2012. Also discussed during the meeting were the preparation of positions on Russia's participation in the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, "Rio +20" in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) in 2012 as well as preparations for the upcoming session of the Conference of parties to the Framework Convention for the protection of the Marine environment of the Caspian Sea in Russia in 2012.

During the meeting, N. Inamov also noted that at the 41st session of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the program presented by Russian "Partnership for Russia and the GEF for sustainable environmental management in the Arctic under a changing climate "(Arctic agenda 2020) was approved among a number of projects to be funded by the GEF. The parties were encouraged by the joint work within the framework of UNEP involvement in the preparation and conduct of the Winter Olympics in Sochi in 2014. During the meeting the parties discussed the possible involvement of UNEP in the development of other GEF projects.

Source: Press Service of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation

Regulation of activities in Antarctica

Draft laws designed by the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and Roshydromet to regulate the activities of Russian citizens and legal persons in Antarctica have been approved by the Presidium of the Russian Government. The adoption of these bills will provide a legislative framework for the implementation and management of activities in Antarctica, and in the first place the Russian Antarctic Expedition.

The bills presented at the meeting were the draft federal law "On regulation of the activity of Russian citizens and legal entities in the Antarctic" (basic law) and "On amendments to certain legislative acts of the Russian Federation in connection with the adoption of the Federal law on regulation of the activity of Russian citizens and legal persons in Antarctica ".

The main bill in accordance with international treaties of the Russian Federation establishes general provisions on the organization of activities in Antarctica of Russian citizens and legal persons as well as the main directions of their regulation. The draft sets out requirements for safety and financial security for activities in Antarctica.

The second bill makes changes to several federal laws in order to conduct urgent investigatory actions, proceedings on administrative violations and registration of a number of procedural documents. The bills have been prepared jointly by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and Roshydromet and agreed with 11 federal executive authorities.

Source: Press Service of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation

Improving the efficiency of environmental monitoring

The Federal law "On amending the federal law on environmental protection and some legislative acts of the Russian Federation", which was developed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and is aimed at improving the effectiveness of state environmental monitoring has been adopted by the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. The bill is part of the "environmental package" prepared by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment within the framework of the environmental legislation reforms.

The document provides for integration into a single system of the 14 existing types of environmental monitoring carried out by more than 10 different agencies. The second innovation is the creation of a single state fund of environmental monitoring data, which should be the basis for management decisions in the field of environmental protection. In addition, the law defines the legal status of the unified state automated system for monitoring the radiation environment, and establishes the provisions necessary for its operation.

At a meeting of the Presidium of the Russian government, which took place on November 10, 2011, the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment **Yury Trutnev** said: *"Even today, the around 1.5 thousand radiation monitoring stations of Roshydromet and Rosatom are united? The legal shell will make it possible to prepare with a different quality both annual public reports on the state, and most importantly - to fulfill our constitutional duty to provide citizens with information about the environmental situation anywhere in the Russian Federation"*.

The text of the bill was approved by the 305th meeting of the Federation Council on November 9, 2011. In reviewing the bill, first deputy chairman of the Federation Council Committee on Natural Resources and Environmental Protection **Nikolai Churkin** noted that climate change and increasing environmental pressure makes a unified system of state environmental monitoring particularly important.

On November 21 Russian President **Dmitry Medvedev** signed the law, and thus approved the amendments providing for the establishment of a unified system of state environmental monitoring. The unified system will include state monitoring of the environmental situation and pollution, monitoring of air, monitoring of the radiation situation in Russia and other subsystems.

The law makes changes to the Land and Forest Codes of the Russian Federation, the federal laws "On fauna", "On specially protected natural areas", "On the use of atomic energy" and other legislative acts to bring them into line with the new legal regulation of state environmental monitoring. In particular, the amendments to the law "On Fauna" abrogate rules on the regulation of guns and hunting methods other than those provided for by the federal law "On hunting and the preservation of game resources and on amendments to certain legislative acts of the Russian Federation".

Commenting on the main provisions of the bill, the chairman of the Committee on Natural Resources, Environment and Ecology **Yevgeny Tugolukov** noted that the final version of it has been seriously worked out by the MPs in terms of eliminating all possible conflicts with existing legislation, as well as the introduction of a new unified conceptual apparatus. "This document is the first in a package of environmental laws, prepared in accordance with the instructions of the President of the Russian Federation. Its adoption is an important and crucial step in a major upgrade of state environmental policy. The new unified system will not only create an "information base" for an effective state, but will also provide an objective picture of the state of our natural capital for all citizens and public organizations," he stressed.

Source: RIA News, Office of Public Relations and Media Relations of the State Duma and Press Service of the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Meeting of Environment Ministers of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region

The 10th meeting of the Ministers of the Environment in the Barents Euro-Arctic Council was held on November 9, 2011 in Umeå (Sweden). The Russian delegation was headed by Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment **Rinat Gizatulin**.

The participants of the event discussed issues dealing with eliminating the environmental "hot spots" in the Barents region, saving biodiversity, measures to mitigate climate change and adaptation to this change. During the meeting the first environmental "hot spots" were excluded: stocks of obsolete pesticides in the Arkhangelsk Region and the Republic of Karelia, as well as mercury-containing waste in the Murmansk region. The exclusion of the first environmental "hot spots" is due to the introduction of procedures to eliminate "hot spots", allowing to obtain measurable results, and the successful

cooperation of the Murmansk region, the Republic of Karelia and the Arkhangelsk Region with Norway, Finland and other states.

In his speech R. Gizatulin noted that the efforts on eliminating environmental "hot spots" in Russia undertaken by Russia and the Swedish representative in the BEAC Working Group on Environment deserve positive assessment. As part of the ministerial meeting of BEAC talks were held with the Minister of Environment of Sweden **Lena Ek** on the further development of bilateral cooperation and interaction within the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM).

The meeting resulted in the parties approving the Ministerial Declaration. In accordance with the rotation principle, the chairmanship of the BEAC Working Group on Environment BEAC was passed to Finland for two years, after which it will go to Russia in 2013.

Source: Press Service of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation

Ecology in the election programs of parties

According to the WWF, the frequency of occurrence of the words "ecology", "ecological", "environment" in the party programs in 2011 is as follows: United Russia - 0 times, the Communist Party - 2 times, the Patriots and Just Cause - 3 times each, Yabloko - 6 times, LDPR and Fair Russia - 9 times each. In general, environmental theme are present in electoral programs at the same level as in 2007.

"The texts of the election programs show that most parties recognize the importance of environmental problems and offer solutions, including long-term ones. The Liberal Democratic Party, Fair Russia, Yabloko and the Just Cause offer economic incentives for environmental protection. LDPR focuses on energy issues and addressing the burning issues that have received great publicity. Fair Russia focuses on the legislation, and Yabloko on specific institutional, legal and economic measures, says **Yekaterina Khmeleva**, Advisor of WWF-Russia on environmental legislation. "It is alarming that environmental protection is absent in the program of United Russia, particularly as it according to estimates will probably have the most seats in the next State Duma".

During the last election campaign, **United Russia** noted "joint solutions to global environmental issues" on its agenda, but this year the party has decided to abandon even this brief mention of the theme in its program. WWF hopes that the neglect of environmental issues in the program does not reflect the views of the party, but is an accidental omission. At the same time the President himself, who heads the election slate of the party on several occasions has held special meetings of the State Council presidium on issues of environmental protection. At the last meeting in June 2011, he regretted that "the environment, of course, is remembered only at the very end".

The **Liberal Democratic Party**, on the contrary, in 2007 bypassed the theme of ecology in the program, and this year speaks of the need to pursue "green" industrialization, taking into account the environmental aspect, fully comply with environmental requirements and use energy saving technologies in the construction industry, and even "*actively develop renewable and clean energy sources, using wind power, tide and solar energy*". LDPR proposes to revisit the issue of the Khimki forest and prevent deforestation and destruction of the unique nature of the territories of the Krasnodar region, which will host the 2014 Olympics.

The party **Fair Russia** has traditionally devoted a large section of the program to environmental protection. Among the concrete proposals are adopting the Environmental Code of the Russian Federation, as well as legislation to provide public ecological expertise, modern methods of disposal of rubbish, to stop building in the green belts of cities, provide environmental education of children, to ban

the activities of polluting enterprises in the vicinity of Lake Baikal, including the Baikal Pulp and Paper Mill.

The party **Yabloko** also has a section about the environment. Yabloko is in favor of re-creation of the government environmental agency, the full restoration of environmental review, economic incentives for the installation of treatment facilities, energy efficiency and switching to renewable sources of energy, non-importation of spent nuclear fuel and no construction of new nuclear power plants and large hydro power plants, increasing the effectiveness of state forest protection and removal of all buildings erected in violation of the laws in protected areas and on the shores of lakes.

Just Cause proposes to fully introduce in Russia by 2020 the most advanced European standards of environmental protection, to tighten the requirements for environmental impact assessment of investment projects, to create a modern system of waste recycling and increase funding for environmental protection. Among the party's proposals is an unusual one - "full tax exemption of producers of 'organic' agricultural products for up to 10 years."

Patriots of Russia call environmental improvement and sustainable use of resources one of its core values and proposes to develop and implement an effective state environmental policy, without specifying measures.

The Communist Party of the Russian Federation also says in general that "the development of production with the predatory practices inherent in capitalism lead to a rapid depletion of vital natural resources," without detailing the proposed measures. The Communist Party calls environmental NGOs its "political allies".

"Unfortunately, the parties' activities after the election do not always coincide completely with their programs. But if all the suggestions offered by the parties' programs were implemented, we would have greatly improved the situation of nature conservation in Russia," says Yekaterina Khmeleva.

Source: WWF Russia

National Forest Policy

November 28, 2011 The Public Environmental Council of the Federal Forestry Agency started discussing the national forest policy. In the meeting of the open Public Environmental Council participated representatives of WWF, the Forest program of the charity foundation "Center for Wildlife Conservation", Greenpeace Russia, the trade union of forest industries of the Russian Federation, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, representatives of organizations under the Federal Forest Agency, and the scientific community.

The Chairman of the Public Environmental Council **V. Maslyakov** stressed that the issue of the National Forest Policy is of great importance for the forest industry of the country. According to him, this document must "determine the course of the industry, directly dependent on the accuracy of the joint decisions made".

The question of developing a forest policy was raised also in the 90s as well as in the early 2000s. However, they failed. Now sufficient grounds for policy development have been accumulated: a reassessment of the role of the forest, natural disasters - wildfires, and a change in the status of federal forest management. The process of rethinking forestry in different countries has taken up to 3 years: from 1 year in Latvia and Macedonia, to 3 years in Finland.

"We cannot allow ourselves to spend 3 years on developing a strategy," said the State Secretary and Deputy Head of the Federal Forestry Agency **A. Panfilov**.

According to E. Schwartz, Doctor of Geographical Sciences, shortcomings in modern forestry legislation and problems in developing a country's forest industry is largely due to the lack of a national forest policy formed as a result from an open public debate. Only in this case, one can count on correct strategic decisions, as well as understanding and support in society. The elaboration of the main directions of the National Forest Policy according to the decision of the Public Environmental Council will be carried out by a special working group.

An open public debate on the preparation of the National Forest Policy of Russia will be held at the Russian National Conference to be held in February 2012. Representatives of the forest management at federal and regional levels, forest industry, forestry, forest science and education, non-governmental organizations, etc will be invited to take part in the conference.

Source: The Federal Forest Agency

Greenpeace on the problems of Lake Baikal

V. Putin has again instructed the government to solve the problem of poisoning of Lake Baikal by effluents from the Baikal Pulp and Paper Mill (BPPM), which he allowed to resume operations in 2010. As previously reported, earlier this fall Vladimir Putin won by a wide margin in the national contest "Enemy of Baikal" and was awarded the "Golden mite". In honor of this momentous event, a special commemorative mark was placed at the bottom of the lake near the pipes discharging toxic effluents from the mill.

A short time passed, and so at a recent government presidium meeting, Vladimir Putin instructed the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment to submit proposals for the paper mill's modernization and conversion. Through the history of Soviet and current Russia more than a dozen such orders have been issued - a whole "Dirty Story" (Greenpeace Russia) has already been compiled from them, and as confusing as they were, they still are. The only memory of the vain attempts is the shot "Monument to unfulfilled promises" standing at the entrance of Baikalsk.

The monument was raised in 2000 and just as the Acting RF President Putin ordered the Russian government to urgently develop a comprehensive conversion program for BPPM, "to as soon as possible stop the discharge of pollutants into Lake Baikal". After 6 years of waiting without results, Putin declared loudly to the whole world: "If there is even the slightest fraction of the probability of contamination of Lake Baikal, we must do everything possible, not to minimize this danger but to exclude it" and "pulled" the pipeline from the lake.

Four years passed, the Prime Minister forgot his promises and signed decree № 1, allowing the BPPM to resume pouring effluents into the purest well of the planet - the Sacred Baikal.

Meanwhile, a large number of long known facts tell that no-body really needs BPPM; that it operates in flagrant violation of Russian and international laws; that it does not help, but hinder the socio-economic development of the region; that it would be easier and more efficient to provide jobs through other real-world projects, and so on and so forth.

The scientific secretary of the Scientific Council of the Baikal, Siberian Branch of RAS, Irina Maximova commented very briefly and succinctly on the problem from the point of view of experts in an interview with "Voice of Lake Baikal": "We are not aware of any objective reasons which could support the work of BPPM."

What new the newly created inter-ministerial working group may come up with in this very clear situation is unclear. What is clear is that the problem is being artificially prolonged, which does not at all do credit to the leaders of our country, says Greenpeace Russia.

Source: Greenpeace Russia

National Conference on Environmental Education

On November 25-26 the Second National Conference on Environmental Education was held in Moscow. The conference was attended by representatives of the State Duma and Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, federal executive authorities, executive and legislative branches of state power of subjects of the Russian Federation, scientists and experts in the field of environmental education and related fields, representatives of higher and secondary educational institutions, the business community and civic organizations.

The conference discussed the modernization of domestic education, taking into account the commitments made by the Russian Federation for environmental education, the possibility of using foreign expertise, the regulatory framework for environmental education, and its quality and value in the formation of environmental awareness among the citizens. The conference was held for the second time and as earlier at the initiative of the environmental public organization "Greenlight". The program for the event includes a series of roundtables to discuss issues of quality of domestic environmental education and its modernization, as well as the introduction of foreign experience. These activities were held at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Moscow State University, the State Public Scientific Technical Library of Russia, Moscow Financial and Law University and the International Independent University of Ecology and Political Science.



*The conference was opened by the Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment **Rinat Gizatulin**.*

Welcoming the participants, he noted that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment conducts a broad educational work within the framework of protected nature areas (PAs). To date, there are more than 150 museums of nature in the reserves and national parks, and the network of information centers is growing. Over 600 million rubles have been invested in the recreational development of PAs in 2011.

According to the Deputy Minister, the Russian government today pays special attention to the development of ecological tourism, as well as interaction with volunteers and non-profit organizations in the field of environmental protection, and also to improvement of environmental legislation. He also said that to change the environmental situation in the country as a whole it is necessary to use a holistic approach: keep protected areas, engage in environmental education, and enact new laws.

R. Gizatulin reported that all bills in the "environmental package" issued by the Ministry may be adopted in the spring of 2012. Two of six have already been adopted by the State Duma of the Russian Federation - on environmental management and environmental monitoring, the rest have passed the first reading. At the spring session the remaining four bills will be submitted: on the standardisation of negative impact on the environment, on the protection of seas from oil pollution; on waste; on protected areas.

Source: Own information
