

Education for Sustainable Development: Russian-Swedish Project

RUSSIAN SUSTAINABILITY NewsLETTER



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Meeting at the Russian Union of Rectors

On August 24, Russian Prime Minister **Vladimir Putin** met with the Russian Union of Rectors, the head of which is academician **V Sadovnichy**, the rector of Moscow State University named after MV Lomonosov. On the eve of the new academic year a discussion of the most pressing problems of higher education in the country was held.



Vladimir Putin at a meeting with the Russian Union of Rectors.

Photo from Russian Prime Minister V. Putin's site.

The meeting participants have repeatedly appealed to the concept of sustainable development based on the idea of the defining role of education in its achievement.

Symptomatic in this regard were the words V Putin addressed to them as the heads of the higher schools in the country: *«I believe we have a common understanding that quality, modern education is a key to sustainable development of our country, the basis for self-realization of specific individuals, the basis for expanding social and economic opportunities for all citizens, a strategic resource for Russia that we must strengthen and fully use. It is thanks to our strong higher education, that the country has many*

times achieved success and won the global competition during the most difficult turns of history - it is sufficient to recall the nuclear or space projects».

Source: Russian Prime Minister V. Putin's site.

International conference on the Arctic

From 6 to August 11, 2011, the international conference "Taking the Northern sea route to strategic stability and equal partnership in the Arctic" was held on board the nuclear-powered icebreaker "Yamal" along the Northern Sea Route (Varandey port - the port of Tiksi) at the initiative of the Russian Security Council and the Foreign Ministry.

The participants received this greeting from the President of the Russian Federation **D. Medvedev**. *"The Arctic holds rich reserves of minerals, and through it passes the shortest shipping route connecting Europe and Asia - the Northern Sea Route - the message says. - Therefore, the sustainable and stable development of the region - based on cooperation and unconditional respect for international law - is of paramount importance. Russia is ready to further contribute to the preservation of the unique nature of the Arctic and the implementation of joint international projects in the transport and mining industries. I hope that the initiatives outlined during your meeting will help address these challenges."*

During the work the key areas of security and international cooperation in the Arctic region were thoroughly and constructively addressed. The conference participants unanimously noted the growing level of cooperation between the Arctic Council states, which is a worthy example for other regions of the world. At the same time, the Arctic Council is assessed as a key forum for international cooperation in the Arctic.

The absence of conflict and unresolved issues between the Arctic states was noted; the situation in the Arctic is estimated as a "low tension zone". The discussions highlighted the major position according to which increase in economic activity at high latitudes should be carried out based on respect for the ecological system of the Arctic and the interests of indigenous peoples. Also discussed in detail was the problem of providing comprehensive and integrated development of navigation along the Northern Sea Route (NSR). Special attention was paid to the physical safety of life in the North, including the need to create a unified system of prediction and prevention of emergencies in the Arctic and the elimination of their consequences.

The bilateral meetings between delegations have enhanced the mutual understanding of the Arctic issues and helped identify additional areas of cooperation in the northern latitudes. The results of the work have laid a good foundation for the development of the cooperation and strengthening the security in the Arctic in the coming international Polar decade.

The National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020 determines that national security is ensured through the achievement of strategic national priorities, most important of which is development and international cooperation. The results of the conference convincingly confirmed that the NSR is indeed a way to strategic stability and equal partnership in the region.

In the work participated the Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation N. Patrushev, the plenipotentiary of the President of the Russian Federation in the Northwestern Federal District I. Klebanov, Russian Transport Minister I. Levitin, Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation for International Cooperation in the Arctic and the Antarctic A. Chilingarov, Vice-president of Russian Academy of Science A. Nekipelov, members of the leadership of the ministries of Regional Development, Foreign Affairs, Natural Resources, Economic Development, Emergency Situations, the

Federal Security Service and other federal bodies of executive power, as well as foreign representatives from USA, Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Finland (the countries of the Arctic Council).

Source: Russian President D. Medvedev's site.

WWF calls to protect the Arctic

WWF and a coalition of environmental organizations are starting a new public campaign to prevent catastrophic oil spills in the Russian Arctic. This is connected to the beginning of the realization of the project to set up the offshore oil platform Prirazlomnaya in the Pechora Sea.

In the world today there's no technology and infrastructure that could take care of a spill over several hundred tons in icy conditions. Nevertheless, Gazprom is setting up an oil platform in the Arctic and plans to begin drilling later this year. The project is carried out by a subsidiary company of Gazprom called Gazprom Neft Shelf. On August 18 they began to move the production platform from the shipyard in Murmansk to its destination, the deposit with the same name - Prirazlomnoye. According to the official website of Gazprom, Prirazlomnaya is positioned as the first offshore ice-resistant drilling platform, designed and built in Russia. Drilling of the first production wells from the platform is scheduled to begin by the end of 2011, says a press release of the company.

Gazprom has declared that while designing Prirazlomnaya special attention was paid to environmental aspects, in particular, the system of "zero" discharge of industrial waste into the sea, and a system for utilization of associated gas. However, there is no doubt among the coalition of Russian environmental organizations that the project is dangerous for the environment. The coalition includes WWF Russia, Greenpeace Russia, the Russian Bird Conservation Union, the Socio-Ecological Union, and the environment protection organization Bellona.

«As Prirazlomnaya is the world's first project for oil extraction in the Arctic, we believe that it should be implemented flawlessly from all points of view, says **Alexei Knizhnikov**, head of the WWF program on 'greening' the oil and gas sector. "However, it is not perfect, and it's not just the absence of the necessary technology. The project does not meet international standards of openness in the documents of the international Arctic Council. »

The environmentalists protested against Gazprom Neft Shelf's program on August 3, issuing a joint statement. They stressed that currently there is no successful experience in oil spill response in arctic conditions, where the oil production is planned to take place. «In the event of an accident the amount of oil ejected into the sea could reach 8-10 thousand tons. The situation is complicated by the fact that the nearest emergency services capable of conducting the spill liquidation at sea is located in Murmansk, about 1000 kilometres from the field ... Against this background, one vivid example of being unprepared for the worst scenarios, is the amount of environmental insurance announced in the project documentation of 7 million roubles, which does not amount to a tenth of a percent of the size of potential damages and losses, » the environmentalists stressed in the text. The Coalition has prepared an open letter to Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and has started collecting signatures.

Source: WWF Russia web site

The President signs law on radioactive waste

Russian President **Dmitry Medvedev** has signed a federal law on radioactive waste (RW), the Kremlin press service announced on Wednesday. The draft law, which also requires changes to some legislative acts of the Russian Federation, was passed by the Parliament on 29 June and approved by the

Federation Council on July 6, 2011. The document envisages the creation of a unified state system of RW management. At the same time, it does not apply to spent nuclear fuel (SNF).

The purpose of the law is to establish a legal regime for the handling of newly produced and previously accumulated radioactive waste. Provisions of the document provide assurance of safety and state control of RW. The law prescribes the powers of the Government of the Russian Federation, federal bodies of executive power, the state corporation Rosatom, organs of state power of RF subjects and local authorities, the national operator for RW handling, as well as the responsibilities of enterprises and industrial activity which leads to the formation of radioactive waste. It defines state registration of the waste, its storage, control and registration, control of the radiation situation and radiation monitoring. In particular, the law stipulates that waste containing nuclear materials must be exclusively federal property. It stipulates state registration and control of all radioactive waste in the territory of the Russian Federation, including the registration of the waste and its place of storage.

According to the document, an organization, whose activities generate waste, is responsible for safety in handling the waste until it is transferred to the national operator. Furthermore, the document stipulates the features of import and export of radioactive waste. Thus, the import of radioactive waste for storage, processing and disposal is prohibited. The export of such waste from Russia is allowed if it is in accordance with an international treaty of the Russian Federation. It is specified that the unified system of radioactive waste handling includes preparation of a special regulatory framework, as well as creation of a disposal system for low-level and high-level radioactive waste. The order and timing of this work is set by the government. It is also the government that defines the national operator - a legal entity authorized to operate on the treatment and disposal of radioactive waste. The organization will be obliged to accept waste for disposal, to provide nuclear, radiological, technical, and fire safety, as well as environmental protection. Radiation monitoring will also be carried out in the waste burial sites, including after their closure. Places of burial of radioactive waste may be federal property or property of the state corporation Rosatom.

The problem of handling the accumulated radioactive waste in Russia can be solved within 30 years with a level of funding of 400 billion rubles, according to Rosatom's draft sub-program on ensuring nuclear and radiation safety in 2016-2020.

Source: RIA News

The Problems of Lake Baikal

Representatives of the UNESCO's World Natural Heritage Committee came to Irkutsk in July together with experts on the natural heritage of the International Union for Conservation of Nature. They came to Lake Baikal to become familiar with the situation at the unique lake after the Baikal Pulp and Paper Mill had resumed its operations. Let us recall that the mill, which brews cellulose on an industrial scale, resumed its activities in July 2010 after eighteen months of inactivity.

In August 2010 the Committee of the UNESCO World Heritage asked Russia to, by February 1, 2011, provide a report that would indicate the steps taken by Russia to stop the mill's pollution of Lake Baikal, as well as reduce pollution of the lake by the River Selenga. It was specifically to familiarize themselves on site with the situation around Baikal Pulp and the lake that the representatives of this international organization came to Lake Baikal.

In the meeting of international experts from civil society organizations participated, in addition to Baikal Environmental Wave, the Baikal campaign of Greenpeace Russia, the youth charity foundation Revival of Siberian Land, as well as residents of Baikalsk.

During the meeting, the environmental organizations called on the UNESCO delegation to include Lake Baikal in the List of World Heritage in Danger. Environmentalists argue that as long as the Baikal Pulp and Paper Mill is in operation, Lake Baikal must be included in the List of World Heritage in danger. Lake Baikal has been in the list of UNESCO World Heritage sites since 1996.

Yesterday, on the eve of today's meeting of environmentalists and UNESCO representatives, the Baikal Pulp and Paper Mill management presented to the UNESCO specialists the draft of the plant's transition to more environmentally friendly ozone-oxygen bleaching of pulp, a project costing 5 billion rubles. The plant currently bleaches pulp with chlorine. However, the environmentalists are skeptical of such plans at the plant, as since last year the BPPM is under external control and in the stage of bankruptcy.

"The attempts to extend the work of the Baikal Pulp and Paper Mill appear to be frivolous and illegal, they endanger the value of Lake Baikal as a World Natural Heritage site and inhibit the development of alternatives. The only way is closure of BPPM at the soonest in combination with contaminated site remediation, the draft of which has been submitted neither to the public nor to the state", RIA News quotes the environmentalists. In addition, environmentalists have reminded President Dmitry Medvedev about the promise given a month ago, to follow the solution of the Baikal Pulp and Paper Mill problem. As is known, at the June meeting with Russian environmentalists **Dmitry Medvedev** said: "A solution must be found, and in the shortest term. If this will mean taking the lead of some social structures, do not worry, we will find those who will lead. If the president needs to be involved - I will."

A letter from the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, which the scientists and environmentalists sent to the Russian President in early July, describes the environmental and economic prospects of further operations of BPPM, as well as the possibility of alternative development in Baikalsk.

The website of Greenpeace Russia, in particular, list the following reasons why it is not appropriate to further the activities of the Baikal Pulp and Paper Mill: - At Lake Baikal BPPM is the main source of super toxins - dioxins, and the zone of influence of its atmospheric emissions extends to many tens of kilometers; - the plant's main technological equipment is hopelessly outdated and makes the transition to new, cleaner technologies extremely difficult; - the plant became unprofitable a long time ago, bringing up to 80 million rubles in losses per year; - an operating BPPM does not make it possible to begin implementation of economically and environmentally sound projects, - the resumption of the plant's activities contradicts both Russian and international legislation, in particular the World Heritage Convention, etc.

This reasonably concern the Russian scientists, who in their letter emphasize that the Russian government, which owns 49% of the shares in the company, carries the political, economic, and social responsibility for the consequences of its activities. Realizing that there is not much time to think and build-up, as previously environmentalists call the authorities and the president into action to save the unique Lake Baikal.

Source: RIA News

Cleaning of Russia's Arctic zone

Russia's Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment is planning to organize live video on the Internet about the progress of the elimination of accumulated damage of the past. In 2011 begins the implementation of several projects to clean up Russia's Arctic zone, including Wrangel Island, Amderma town (Nenets Autonomous District), Franz Josef Land, and the territories contaminated as a result of the former Dzhida tungsten-molybdenum plant at Lake Baikal. On these sites it is planned to install video cameras.

The work on cleaning up contaminated sites and disposal of waste include: development of methodology and survey expedition, establishment of the Programme (work plan) for the elimination of sources of negative impacts in the affected areas and its implementation. The priority activities to clean up contamination from Wrangel Island and the village Amderma include eliminating sources of pollution (about 100 barrels of fuel and 5 - 7 tons of scrap metal), waste disposal to prevent and reduce pollution of the sea and territories with radioisotopes, petroleum products, heavy metals and other toxic substances.

Pollution on the islands of the archipelago of Franz Josef Land and Wrangel Island are local in nature and are the result of the operation of decommissioned objects of the Ministry of Defense, former polar stations, research clinics and bases. The list of other areas to be treated will be determined based on the results of research on the types and degree of pollution of land and waters of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation, the possibility of using existing methods, tools and technologies for treatment and final disposal of waste.

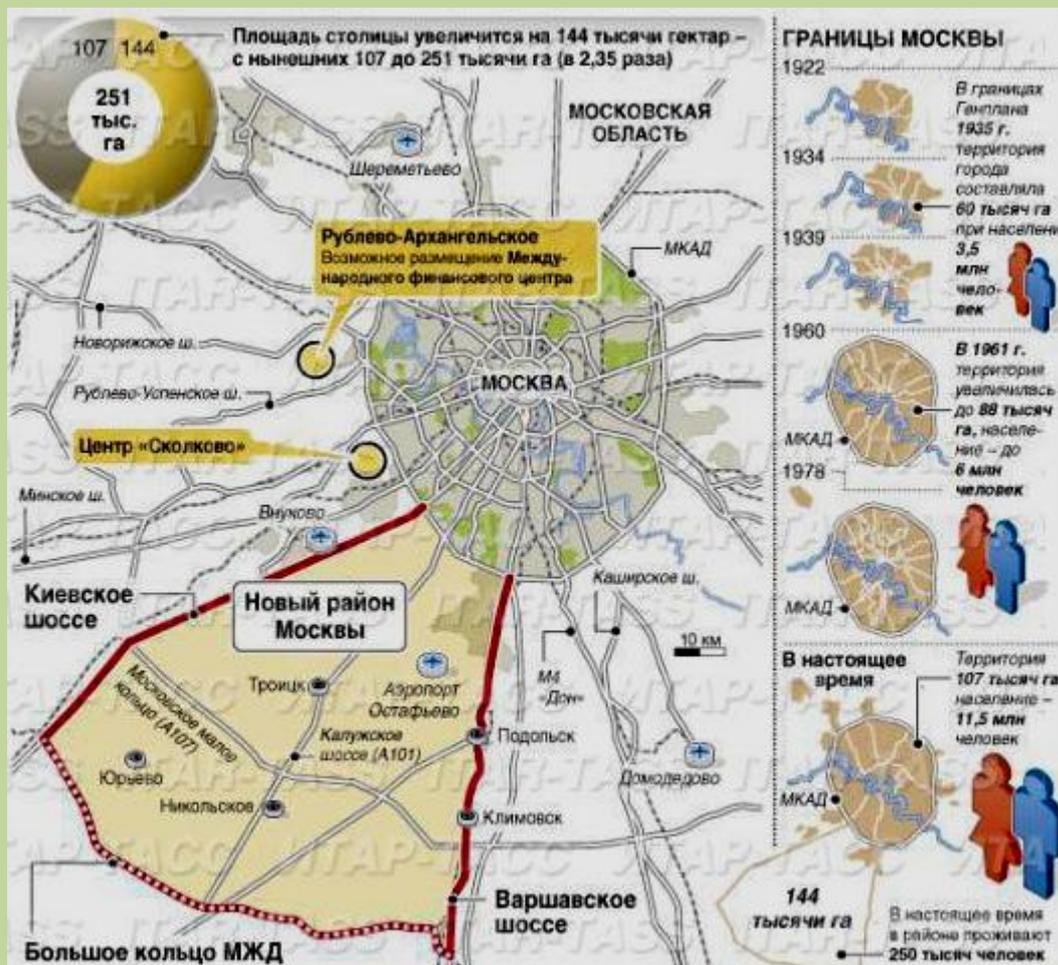
Source: Press office of the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment of Russia

Moscow is expanding

Russian President **Dmitry Medvedev** has announced the feasibility of expanding the borders of Moscow and creating a federal capital district that goes beyond the traditional boundaries of the capital. *«To improve the development of the Moscow metropolis, for the purposes of the financial center it may be considered to expand the borders of Moscow. That is, the creation of a federal capital district, which goes beyond the traditional boundaries of Moscow, and transfer over these border a significant proportion of administrative functions at the federal level and, therefore, government agencies»*, - the head of state said at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum at the end of June 2011.

In early July of this year the Mayor of Moscow **Sergei Sobyanin** and Moscow region governor Boris Gromov presented to President Medvedev a plan for the global expansion of the capital. Its area will be increased from 107 to 251 thousand square kilometers, ie about 2.35 times. To the capital they are looking to add the adjacent territory of the South-West and West districts (*see map*). It is planned to "make Moscow" also of Skolkovo, which will become the center of innovation, and Rublevo-Arkhangelsk, where the International financial center will be housed.

Enormous areas will be added to Moscow, and the main task now is to use them correctly, according to the known Russian architect, Doctor of Architecture **Andrey Bokov**. - We will need to create new city centers, business and administrative centers, in the annexed territories. Moscow is now the only world capital with the Middle Ages radial-ring structure. As a result, the historic city center - the neighborhood of the Kremlin - carries an unbearable burden. After all, here are focused both the administrative agencies, and the business centers. Meanwhile, London, Paris and other capitals have a polycentric structure. Here is the historic center; it is cherished, not rebuilt. Here is the business center, and there the government buildings. This is one option. But there is another. If we want to become a city of the XXI century, we need to build a so-called linear city, which will unite the existing airports in Moscow. And it is they that have become hotbeds of activity, the new centers of Moscow! Thus develop many capitals. In the twenty-first century, time is very expensive, so to airports, these clots of activity is gradually moving business districts, government buildings and housing of people who work in them and move a lot around the country and the world. This is objectively. In the nineteenth century, the city pressed against the rail, in the twentieth century - to the car now - to airports. And if before the "backbones" of Moscow were the roads extending like rays from the Kremlin, now they should be the roads that connect Sheremetyevo, Domodedovo and Vnukovo.



Source: Adapted from ITAR-TASS etc.

Moscow goes for selective waste collection

The city authorities plan to attract business to the construction of waste treatment plants. This told **Anton Kulbachevsky**, head of the profile department, during a discussion of the environmental program. According to the program, over the next five years Muscovites have to go over to separate collection of garbage. But what's the point to put the paper in one container, and plastic in another, if in the end it's all lumped together? Indeed, Moscow does not have any waste processing plant. Also, officials are not planning to build waste processing plants using the funds allocated under the program for addressing the most urgent environmental problems (about 184.5 billion rubles). The waste that is now collected in the government airport Vnukovo (recently, 12 containers and 60 bins for separate collection of glass, plastic and paper were set up there as an experiment), is first being taken to one of the receiving-purveying enterprises, where it is pressed and then to processing plants located far outside the city. From this waste arises more fuss than the environmental and economic benefits from its processing. Separate bins are rather needed to ensure that Muscovites gradually get used to using them.

Meanwhile, the garbage business is quite profitable. "First you need to invite entrepreneurs to handle the waste sorting and recycling," - says Kulbachevsky. According to him, the Moscow authorities are ready to create the necessary conditions for successful business and support innovative projects. And if the business people do not find the garbage business attractive, the city will take the development of this branch upon itself. The idea is to create eco-science parks in the suburbs and other areas of the

Central Federal District, which will deal with sorting, processing, partial combustion and utilization of waste.

"Parallel to this, you need to understand to what degree people are ready for separate waste collection," said the head of the department. For each of us, buying different goods, hardly considers that 90% of them are waste - packaging, bottles, foil, cans." When there is a waste recycling industry in Moscow, according to Kulbachevsky, the plan is to expand selective waste collection into the residential sector.

"Now around 3000 containers for separate waste collection have been established next to the conventional metal bins, in 36 districts of Moscow (among them, Gagarin, Alexis, Western and Eastern Degunino and others), said Alexander Odrov, head of the housing department for industrial processing of industrial and household waste. "Last year only 17.5 thousand tons of waste were collected in these containers. This is a very small figure." It really is not much, considering that the city residents annually produce more than five million tons of household waste. And if you add on to them more and bulky types of waste, from construction and industries, it adds up to 22 million tons.

According to Kulbachevsky, the transition to separate collection of waste is a lengthy process, as it will be difficult to rid the Muscovites of the habit generated over the years to throw away everything in the same bag. For many developed countries, including Germany, it has taken decades. But if it isn't done, Moscow is threatened by a garbage collapse. The landfills in the Moscow region in which about 80% of the capital's waste is being buried, are already filled, and, according to environmentalists, will have exhausted their resources in about four years time.

Source: Rossiyskaya Gazeta

Protected areas on land being connected to Moscow

The Russian Ministry of Natural Resources is preparing a proposal for the establishment of protected areas (PAs) in the lands being connected to Moscow, the ministry said on Tuesday.

Earlier, Russian President **Dmitry Medvedev** proposed to expand the boundaries of Moscow, creating a "Capital Federal District." The Mayor of Moscow, **Sergei Sobyanin** said that the capital's territory would be increased by 2.4 times by adding the areas bounded by the Kiev and Warsaw highway, and also the Great ring of the Moscow railway.

"The Ministry of Natural Resources has come out with an initiative to create protected areas on the land being connected to the capital, which will save objects that have special environmental and recreational value. These areas can be removed from economic use completely or partially, and they will be set to special protection," it says in a statement by the Ministry of Natural resources and Environment of Russia.

An analysis of the areas being connected to Moscow, concerning their nature conservation value will be conducted by the department of public policy and regulation in the field of environmental protection and ecological safety of the Ministry of Natural Resources. In this, the implementation of the initiative will be undertaken by the Ministry together with the governments of Moscow and Moscow region. At present there are two federal protected areas in Moscow and the Moscow region: the Oka-Terrace Nature Reserve and Losiny Island National Park. In addition, the possibility of creating Rublevsky National Park is currently being considered.

Source: RIA News

Moscow's Environmental Protection program discussed

The "Environmental Protection" Draft State Programme of Moscow for the years 2012-2016 years, practically contains no quantitative environmental performance indicators and is suitable only to fill the budget, according to WWF. On August 29, 2011 in the Department of Natural Resources and Environment of the Government of Moscow, a meeting took place of the Public Environmental Council to discuss the project. The vast majority of the panelists were subjected to severe criticism, including the scientific director of the Road Transport Institute (JARI) **VV Donchenko**, Head of the Research Institute of the Ministry of Natural Resources Dr. **BL Samoilov**, and the director of the Moscow City Society for Nature Protection **GV Morozov**.

"The program is a crude sketch of how the Department of Natural Resources and Environment of Moscow would like to spend more than 90 billion rubles and is composed according to Soviet-style "voluminous" planning of expenses of the city budget," said the director of environmental policy of WWF Russia, Doctor of Geographical Sciences Eugene Schwartz, who spoke at the meeting with a proposal to reject and revise the draft. "The program has no common quantitative targets for improving the environment and the greening of life and economy of the city, which the Government of Moscow must reach by 2016."

In the program there are no targets for green transport in the city, in the first place - the timing and the transition to Euro 4 and 5 of all motor vehicle transport of Moscow, the creation of infrastructure for gas supply of public transport, the development of electric vehicles (including motor vehicles), economic and tax incentives for the most environmentally friendly and energy-efficient engines and vehicles with hybrid engines. To that issue, WWF reminds, was devoted the recent order of the President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev following the meeting of the Presidential Commission on Modernization of the economy.

"On such a sore issue for Moscow, as the lack of separate waste collection and civilized processing of the waste, only a declarative statement is given, not backed by concrete measures," said Eugene Schwartz. Quantitative indicators are needed, according to the WWF. The program has almost no mention of the work, which does not involve spending the city budget, but the organizing role of city government is necessary, just like tax reforms and changes in legislation at the federal level and in Moscow itself. For example, the introduction of container deposit fees, legislation on greening state and local government, changes in legislation, allowing the subjects of the Russian Federation to independently establish an earlier date of transition to the demands of Euro 4 and Euro 5 for motor fuels, etc. There are no priorities for procurement according to environmental features (as in the whole world), not even for children's institutions, although this is an important tool for green economic development. "Now tenders have only one crucial indicator - the price," says the WWF.

The fear among environmentalists is not restricted by any quantitative and qualitative "increase of the recreational appeal of" Protected Areas (PAs) in Moscow. "In fact, we are talking about allocating huge budgets, and most dangerous - billions of dollars of private investors - for construction of protected areas. Behind the crafty figures of increasing the area of protected areas from 16% to 21% in fact hides a decrease in the area of natural areas in the city and replacing them with artificial communities, placed outside of protected areas, according to Moscow city law № 48," said Schwartz. It should be noted that the leading specialists of the Lomonosov Moscow State University, Institutes of the Russian Academy of Sciences and professional environmental NGOs have not been involved in the development and discussion of the sections on wildlife protection and management of protected areas.

According to environmental organizations, the draft program should be complemented by plans to minimize negative impacts on the environment due to the recent decision by the Mayor of Moscow and the Governor of Moscow Region to increase the area by 144 thousand hectares. In particular, it should

be possible to finance research (2012-13) to assess the environmental impact (EIA) of the plans to expand Moscow, and to develop mitigation measures based on the findings of the EIA.

Source: WWF Russia's web site

New protected areas in St. Petersburg

It is planned to increase the number of protected areas in St. Petersburg to twenty-one nature reserves (10% of the total area of the city). On August 1 this was discussed at the public hearings of the city budget's item "Ecology".

As said the chairman of the Committee on Natural Resources, Environmental Protection and Ecological Safety **Dmitry Golubev**, in 2011 by the decision of the city government were formed the state natural reserves of regional significance, Pike Lake and Sestroretsk Bog, and the state natural monument Peter's Pond. And soon West Kotlin and Yelagin Island will be protected areas. This has been talked about for long, but it is only now that it has been substantively discussed and the financial matters dealt with.

Source: REGNUM

Wildfires in the summer of 2011

The number of wildfires this summer was 10 times less than in the summer of 2010, the director of the Hydrometeorological Center of Russia **Roman Vilfand** told reporters on Thursday. "This year, the situation is much calmer. The number of fires is much smaller than last year. This is due to the fact that eight of nine fires were put out on the day of discovery," said Vilfand.

The head meteorologist said that this year most of the fires were recorded in the Asian part of Russia, but the amount of precipitation was much larger than in the past year, and this as well as the higher level of training of emergency services severely reduced the negative consequences of these fires. Last summer, and part of the autumn in large parts of Russia stormed the strongest natural fires caused by abnormal heat. In 19 subjects of the federation suffered 199 settlements, 3.2 thousands of homes burned, 62 people were killed. This year, fires also swept large areas, especially the Far East, Siberia and north-west of the country.

Source: RIA News

Green standardization news

The building of the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment became the first public authority building to be tested for compliance with "green standards". When checking the examined object several measurements were used at the same time: "Green standards" - the compliance measurement systems of voluntary certification of real estate, the Russian law on energy conservation and energy efficiency and Greenpeace Russia's recommendations on "How to make the office green."

The composition of energy used in the building was determined, together with the level of energy efficiency, the most probable location of energy losses, as well as measures designed to rationalize energy consumption. The survey of the object resulted in a list of recommended tasks, the implementation of which will increase the efficiency of energy resources, reduce energy consumption and its costs as well as maintenance costs of the power systems. As a result, the scheduled works will lead to increased reliability of energy systems, long service life of equipment, normalized parameters of

the microclimate and light in the premises in accordance with sanitary norms.

As a result of the work energy-saving measures were developed for the ministry building, an energy performance certificate was issued, and recommendations made, whose implementation will significantly reduce the building's consumption of resources, reduce waste and the building's impact on the environment. In particular, the non-commercial partnership Center for Green standards Environmental Certification, which carried out the evaluation of the building, showed in their recommendation the opportunity of landscaping the roof of the Ministry, the need to use recycled paper produced without chlorine bleaching, and the use of separate waste collection.

The main purpose of voluntary environmental certification is to encourage producers and builders to use environmentally friendly materials and technologies that reduce the negative impact on the environment, reduce energy and water consumption and generally create optimal conditions for the safe operation the construction projects. The Center for Green standards Environmental Certification, acting with the support of the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment, is working to develop normative and methodological documents regulating the operation of systems of environmental certification.

Source: Press Office of the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment

Environmental rating of Russia's regions

According to the results of environmental monitoring for July 2011 Sverdlovsk region took the last place (83) in the ranking for Russia's regions. According to the study conducted by the Russian Society of Nature Protection, in the Sverdlovsk region there is no positive trend for any indicators of the eco-rating: the state of air, surface and ground water, forest fires, biodiversity, species, elimination of landfills, reducing stationary sources of pollution and the situation with radiation and the chemical environment.

Particularly acute in the Sverdlovsk region is the question of pollution of surface water and air. So, in July this region received the worst performance assessment for these indicators - minus three points, which means a sharp deterioration. The situation was stabilized only in the biological diversity of species, the struggle with stationary sources of pollution, as well as radiation and chemical environment - on these items the situation has not improved, but it has also not worsened, in contrast to the other indicators.

The Urals Federal District was also the worst with regards environmental condition, compared with other federal districts of Russia. The Urals Federal District took the last place in the ranking due to the poor condition of the air. First in the ranking are the Altai Republic, the Tuva Republic, and Orjol Region. St. Petersburg ranked 45th place, Moscow - 77.

Source: Press Office of the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment

New Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment

Denis Khramov has been appointed Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation. The corresponding order was signed by Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin on August 23, 2011. D Khramov will be in charge of the Department of the Ministry's Department of

Economics and Finance, the Department of State policy and regulation in the area of geology and mineral resources, and the Federal Agency for Subsoil Use (Rosnedra).

Denis G. Khramov was born July 9, 1975 in Samara. In 1997 he graduated from Ural State Law Academy, with the specialty "Jurisprudence", and in 1999 from the Russian private law school with the degree "Master of Private Law." He holds a degree in jurisprudence.

D. Khramov has worked in the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade Ministry as department head. From 2002 to 2007 he worked with mining, economics and finance in the JSC Zarubezhneft. From 2007 to 2008 he worked in the company Dewey & LeBoeuf. From 2008 to present D. Khramov served as the Director of the Department of State Policy and Regulation of Geology and Minerals at the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment. Prior to August 1, 2011, the title Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment was held by Sergey Donskoy, who has been appointed head of the JSC Rosgeologiya by decree of Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin.

Source: Press Office of the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment

On a national forest policy for Russia

WWF Russia has appealed to the head of the Federal Forestry Agency **Viktor Maslyakov** with a proposal to in early 2012 hold an All-Russian conference on forests, the main theme of which will be the creation of a national forest policy for Russia. WWF Russia suggests to the head of the Federal Forestry Agency of Russia, VN Maslyakov, to hold the All-Russian Forest Conference in January and February 2012 under the auspices of the Federal Forestry Agency and WWF, and that the conference be headed by First Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov. The conference should involve representatives of the forest management at federal and regional levels, the forest industry, forestry, forest science and education, NGOs, etc.

The central theme of the conference should be to prepare and discuss a draft National Forest Policy for Russia. According to WWF, this policy should be a qualitative basis for the development of fundamental strategic decisions in the forestry sector. To do this, it is necessary to determine the direction of the National Forest Policy in the development of forest legislation, the transition to ecologically sustainable intensive model of forest management, conservation of old-growth forests and the array of biodiversity in exploited forests, development of optimal models and mechanisms to prevent anthropogenic forest fires and to combat illegal logging, the development of satellite monitoring of the state and use of forests, voluntary forest certification and access for environmentally responsible forest users to the eco-sensitive world markets, to ensure public participation in forest management, etc.

«Unfortunately, the International Year of Forests in our country has not led to serious discussions in the Russian society, nor to rejecting simplistic and narrow utilitarian relation to the forest as a source of "logs" and "an obstacle" to the development of urban and transport infrastructure," says **Evgeny Shvarts**, WWF-Russia's Director of environmental policy and co-chair of the Public Council of Rosleskhoz. "But the protests from the same population, non-governmental organizations, professional foresters and scientists desiring to protect forests, associated with the need to eliminate the shortcomings and mistakes of the Forest Code, continue to grow».

Source: WWF Russia's web site
