

# Education for Sustainable Development: Russian-Swedish Project

## RUSSIAN SUSTAINABILITY NewsLETTER



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## ***Editorial. Year of the Environment in Russia. Emblems and problems***

In April this year, the Ministry of Environment approved the logo for the Year of Environmental Protection in the Russian Federation. The optimists are happy: the first campaign of this kind in Russia has now received a semantic symbol, and the year isn't even over!

In April, there were many other reasons for environmental optimism. Among them are also the conclusions of the Prognosis of the long-term socio-economic development of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030, which was approved by the Russian Prime Minister in late March. The document contains a special section devoted to the protection of the environment. It talks about the formation of an effective management system in this field and ensuring environmental security and green growth in the economy. Among the directions indicated are reducing the carbon intensity of the economy (specific emissions of greenhouse gas per unit of GDP), and measures to adapt to climate change.

According to the World Wildlife Fund, the prognosis involves a good increase of investments in fixed capital, aimed at protecting the environment and managing natural resources. By 2020, these should be 150% of 2007 levels, and by 2030 - more than 200%. Also the budget financing of environmental protection and security is expected to grow - by 2020 to 0.5% of GDP, and then to 1.5% of the GDP. Then by 2030, specific indicators of negative impact on the environment should be reduced by three times: there will be three times less cities with high air pollution and three times less waste.

There were also many other positive signals. Thus, the State Duma on April 8 held a public hearing on the issue of protection of Lake Baikal, and the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation on April 24 held the Social Forum on Sustainable Development - the central theme of Russian nature protection. More and more often, however, one becomes concerned that such events are of a "decorative" character in modern Russia's environmental policy. In real politics its place is disproportionately modest. Thus, there was no place for it in the Russian government report for 2012, which on April 18 was presented in the State Duma by its leader Dmitry Medvedev. Environmental issues were also completely absent in the central political event of April - almost five hours of direct dialogue between President Vladimir Putin and the country.

Hence, in April 2013 there are still few reasons for environmental optimism: even though there are emblems, the problems remain and exist, as before, in separate, non-overlapping spaces.

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## ***Emblem for the Year of Environment in Russia***

The Year of Environment in the Russian Federation has received a logotype. The winner of the competition announced earlier was **Denis Yezhov** from Murom (Vladimir region).

Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation Rinat Gizatulin said: *"We are delighted that the competition attracted a lot of attention to the Year of the environment. Because of the large number of participants and the even larger number of their entries it was hard to pick a winner. Holding this kind of competition is a contribution to raising the environmental awareness of all citizens of Russia, involving each of us in conservation and preservation of nature's riches."*



As conceived by the winner, the logo carries an important semantic meaning - unity: to change the environmental situation in the country, it is necessary to unite all. The logo depicts the outlines of Russia without division into regions and cities.

The circle the author intends to be the Earth. Every person on Earth should be involved in the fight against environmental problems. The sprout symbolizes the rebirth of environmental prosperity. The colours are based on the colours of the Russian flag, and the green colour symbolizes nature, the origin of life.

The competition was held from February 1, 2013, and the participants were several hundred representatives of legal entities, businesses and organizations of all forms of ownership, public organizations, and individuals. The winner of the contest and the winners in the individual categories will receive diplomas of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation.

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

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## ***News from the Russian Geographical Society***

On April 30, the fifth meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Russian Geographical Society (RGS) was held at the Constantine Palace in St. Petersburg was. It was attended by President of the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Russian Geographical Society, **Vladimir Putin**, Russian Defence Minister, President of the Society **Sergey Shoigu**, representatives of the Russian media community, the business community and leading geographic scientists.



The solemn ceremony was opened by Vladimir Putin. He called on the trustees and the media council to intensify work on youth projects: "I ask the Board of Trustees and our Media Council to pay special attention to youth projects."

*Photo: RGS*

Vladimir Putin launched an initiative to create a youth movement in RGS. *"We need to make the action program bright, fitting the spirit and language of today. Here we need meaningful and creative initiatives, and solid support,"* said the president.

Vladimir Putin awarded a certificate of election as member of the Society's Board of Trustees to the Head of the Presidential Administration of the Russian Federation, Sergey Ivanov. Sergey Ivanov is the curator of the Far Eastern leopard conservation program. Its implementation is carried out by the Euro-Asian center for research, preservation and restoration of the leopard population.



Sergey Shoigu told about the results of the Russian Geographical year for 2012 and the Society's plans for the current year.

*Photo: RGS*

*"Because, by law, only citizens 18 years of age can become members of NGOs, we suggest to gather under the auspices of the Society of Children's and youth organizations in Russia that support our goals and interests, and to call it the RGS Rangers,"* said Sergey Shoigu. According to him, the Society plans to form a full-fledged youth movement, which will provide talented and active young people the opportunity to express themselves and will serve as a personnel reserve of the Society. For example, this summer, the first Youth Summer School of Russian Geographical Society will be held, with the participation of prominent Russian and foreign scientists and public figures.

Source: Press Service of the RGS.

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## ***State programme on the reproduction and use of natural resources***

The web site of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has published the State Programme of the Russian Federation "Reproduction and use of natural resources" (Decree of the Russian Federation Government of March 26, 2013 № 436-r).

*"The main goals of the state program are: ensuring sustainable supply of mineral resources and geological information on subsoil resources, sustainable water use while maintaining aquatic ecosystems and ensuring the security of the population and the economy from the adverse impact of water, as well as ensuring the survival, reproduction and rational use of hunting resources,"* said the Minister of Natural resources and Environment Minister **Sergey Donskoy**. The goals will be achieved through the following objectives: increasing geological knowledge of the territory of the Russian Federation and its continental shelf, the Arctic and Antarctic, obtaining geological information, ensuring the reproduction of the mineral resource base and ensuring the rational use of mineral resources.

Also envisaged are addressing such key issues as: ensuring socio-economic needs in water resources, the protection and restoration of water bodies, ensuring the safety of water management systems and structures, ensuring the security of the population and the economy from the adverse impact of water, ensuring the survival and reproduction of game resources.

The Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has been defined as executive in charge of the state program, participants are: the Ministry of Agriculture of Russia, Rosprirodnadzor, Roshydromet, Rosvodresursy, Rosnedra, the Federal Fishery Agency and Rosstroy. The activities included in the draft state program are planned to be implemented over the period from 2013 to 2020.

The draft state programme includes the following sub-programmes: Reproduction of mineral resources, exploration of mineral resources; Use of water resources; Conservation and reproduction of hunting resources; Ensuring the implementation of the state program, as well as the passport of the federal target program Development of the water management system of the Russian Federation 2012-2020, which was approved by the Government of the Russian Federation on April 19, 2012 (№ 350).

During the implementation of the program it is expected to achieve a number of results. In particular, in the field of geology and mineral resources: by 2020 a geological map in the scale 1:1,000,000 will be compiled for the entire territory of the Russian Federation and its continental shelf; promising areas of the territory of the Russian Federation and its continental shelf studied will increase by 45%; the increase in stocks of major minerals will be: oil - 6010 million tons, natural gas - 12,600 billion cubic meters, coal - 7,120 million tonnes, uranium - 106 thousand tons, iron ore - 1600 million tonnes, gold - 4072 tonnes. The share of licenses to be implemented without departing from the essential terms of the license agreements will rise to 80%.

In the water sector it is expected to improve the water supply of the population to 6.3 million people in regions with water deficiency; 1.5 times reduction of GDP water consumption; 2 times reduction in the proportion of contaminated wastewater in the total discharge to surface water bodies; increase the proportion of the population protected from the adverse impacts of water to 85% in 2020. In the field of conservation and reproduction of hunting resources it is expected to increase the level of hunting resources limits for certain types to 74% by 2020, ensuring the effectiveness of hunting control, minimization of other factors of negative impact on the number of hunting resources, etc.

More detailed information on the programme (in Russian) can be found at the web site of the Ministry of Environment.

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

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## ***Press conference held by the head of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment***

Russian minister of Natural Resources and Environment **Sergey Donskoy** has presented a public declaration of goals and objectives in priority areas of the Ministry's work. At the press conference in the RIA Novosti press center, the head of department and his deputies identified the strategic and tactical objectives for 2013. Given the current public interest in environmental issues, the Ministry has prepared a list of projects planned for implementation already in the current year.

The Ministry's list of priorities includes such topics as: fauna protection and reproduction, forest industry development, subsoil resources management, introduction of ozone-friendly technologies, development of measures to eliminate accumulated environmental damage, ecosystem rehabilitation and development of the Lake Baikal natural territory.

In his speech, Sergey Donskoy stressed the Ministry's interest in improving the mechanisms for feedback and active participation in the Ministry's work Natural by the public and businesses. *"I am convinced that the debate and the search for solutions to optimize nature management should not be carried out behind closed doors". Because this is a global issue that really concerns every citizen of our country,* said Sergey Donskoy.

The ministry head paid special attention to the development of an efficient and modern system of waste management. A major step in this programme is the final approval of the new version of the federal law

on production and consumption waste and the federal target programme on the elimination of past environmental damage. In the framework of this programme, Russian Federation regions and enterprises have already submitted applications to the Ministry of Russia for the implementation of 106 projects for a total sum of 136 billion rubles. Removing the "forgotten" waste in the Arctic and at Lake Baikal will also continue during 2013. Over 1.5 billion rubles will be allocated this year to eliminate the accumulated damage in the Nizhny Novgorod region, where the "Black hole" dump and "White sea" sludge lagoon are located.

In the area of water bodies, which, as shown by results of a recent opinion poll, is of particular concern to citizens, a priority task in 2013 is to implement the federal programme on water infrastructure development. The Ministry of Environment will launch two new directions of work within the framework of this programme. In particular this concerns environmental remediation of water bodies and subsidizing enterprise projects on upgrading sewage treatment plants. Work in this direction is already underway in Petrozavodsk, Rostov-on-Don, Tver, Barnaul, and in St. Petersburg. For example, by upgrading its sewage treatment facilities, the state enterprise St. Petersburg Vodokanal could bring the level of wastewater treatment in the city to 98.4%.

Concluding his speech, Sergey Donskoy noted that the Ministry's list of priority projects would not be complete without comprehensive measures for the protection and development of Lake Baikal. In 2013, more than 1 billion rubles will be allocated to projects in the framework of the federal programme for protection of Lake Baikal and the socio-economic development of the Baikal natural territory for 2012-2020.

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

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## ***International Arctic Council conference***

Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment **Denis Khramov** took part in the International Conference of the Arctic Council "Providing industrial and environmental security in the Arctic: the way forward".

In his speech, Khramov said: *"The mineral resources of the Arctic have a great potential, which should be the driver for the development of remote and inaccessible regions of the country, industry development, and strengthening the strategic position of Russia. To date, 594 oil deposits, 159 gas deposits, two nickel deposits and more than 350 gold deposits have been discovered in the region."*



During the conference, which was held in Salekhard April 9-11, 2013, the participants discussed the prospects for international cooperation in the field of disaster prevention in the Arctic, the problems of safety of navigation and environmental safety of the Northern Sea Route, as well as issues of resource development in the Arctic and conservation of Arctic ecosystems. The photo depicts the Russian delegation.

Photo: Web site of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

According to the deputy minister, within the framework of studies of the outer boundary of the continental shelf of the Russian Federation in the Arctic Ocean bathymetric survey line work has been conducted on 10,613 linear km and 17,250 linear km at line crossings, 760 km airborne seismic and 128 hydrological stations. *"In 2013 it is planned to prepare an updated proposal on the limits of the*

*continental shelf for submission to the UN Commission," he said.*

Work is underway to eliminate the accumulated environmental damage in the Arctic. At the end of 2011, a work program was designed to eliminate sources of negative impact on the affected areas of Franz Joseph Land in the period 2011-2020. In particular, Khramov said: *"In 2013, it is planned to carry out work on eliminating the contamination on the islands of Alexandra Land, Graham-Bell, Rudolph Hayes and Hoffmann. The total contamination should be reduced, as in 2012, by 8000 tonnes, and technical reclamation be done on an area of 34 ha."* In addition, the work will continue on Wrangel Island to eliminate pollution, including recycling of steel drums and the remnants of fuels and lubricants.

In Russia, a traditional and highly effective form of environmental activities is the creation of protected areas (PAs). To date, according to Khramov, there are 23 federal protected areas (11 reserves, 3 national parks and 9 federal sanctuaries) in the Russian Arctic with a total area of 22,938 hectares, and 86 protected areas of regional significance with a total area of 28,700 thousand hectares. In addition, 11 federal protected areas in the Russian Arctic include marine waters.

In accordance with the concept of development of federal protected areas for the period to 2020, it is planned to create two new national parks in the Russian Arctic zone - Central Chukotka (Chukotka) and Khibiny (Murmansk region), and also one new reserve, Bear island (Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), as well as to expand the territory of the Paanayarvi national park (Murmansk region).

*"In 2013, the Beringia national park was established in Chukotka, which in the future will help carrying out comprehensive monitoring of the region most affected by the global changes in the Arctic. The area of the park will be included in the system of environmental and sports tourism. Beringia national park will be part of a Russian-American reserve. This transboundary reserve will consist of Beringia on the territory of Russia and the Bering Land Bridge national park in the United States,"* informed the deputy minister.

*"Another pressing issue is the global warming in the Arctic. Over the past 30 years, the area of ice cover has decreased by 2 times. I hope that the fruitful and constructive cooperation of the member states of the Arctic Council on the protection of the environment will allow us to preserve the Arctic ecosystems,"* Khramov summed up.

This was the third meeting of high representatives of Arctic Council member states under the auspices of the Security Council. The event was traditionally attended by: Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev, Advisor to the President of the Russian Federation Alexander Bedritsky, Special Presidential Envoy for International Cooperation in the Arctic and Antarctic Artur Chilingarov, Regional Development Minister Igor Slunyaev, Governor of the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District Dmitry Kobylkin, Deputy Minister of Transport Victor Olersky, Deputy Head of the Ministry of Emergency Situations Alexander Chupriyan, Special Commissions Ambassador of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia Anton Vasiliev, as well as representatives from the U.S., Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Finland.

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

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## ***OECD and the modernization of the Russian economy***

Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Rinat Gizatulin attended Membership in the OECD in order to modernize the Russian economy - a high-level seminar with the directors of directorates of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The event was held April 25, 2013 in Paris. The Russian government delegation on this working visit was headed by First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov. April 26, 2013 an emergency OECD Council meeting on Russia's

accession was held at ambassadorial level.

Delivering a speech in the seminar's Environment section, Gizatulin said that the Russian side has already for more than two years been working to implement OECD decisions and recommendations into national law: *"In particular, 5 April 2013 was adopted the federal law on the federal contract system in the procurement of goods, works and services aimed at comprehensive improvement of legislation in the field of public procurement, a law provided for in the draft action plan for incorporating OECD recommendations on environmental issues in Russian legislation."*

The Deputy Minister stressed that also a number of environmental laws have been adopted, on protecting the marine environment from oil pollution, on the development of state environmental supervision, and on improving the monitoring of the environment. Since 2011, a number of pilot projects to clean up Russian territories from contamination associated with past economic activity have been implemented. *"All of this has made it possible to reduce, with sustained GDP growth, the level of anthropogenic impact on the environment: gross emissions and discharges as well as the growth of waste generation have been reduced. In this regard, the environmental situation in Russia has stabilized,"* said Gizatulin.

R Gizatulin informed the participants about Russia's active work for the ratification of the Espoo Convention and the accession to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment. Work also continues on the ratification of the Aarhus Convention. The deputy head of the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources reminded: *"In 2011, the Stockholm Convention on persistent organic pollutants was ratified. In 2012, the President of the Russian Federation adopted a strategic document - The Fundamentals of Environmental Policy of the Russian Federation until 2030. In 2012 the Government of the Russian Federation also approved the Environmental protection state program for 2012-2020. A number of federal programmes with environmental focus have been adopted and are being implemented."*

In conclusion, Gizatulin said: *"2013 has been declared the Year of the Environment by Decree of the Russian President. This is a significant event for us, being held for the first time in the history of modern Russia. Its main objective is to consolidate the efforts and involve the general public of all ages, social and scientific organizations, as well as the business community in addressing environmental issues."*

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

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## ***Russian cooperation with UNEP***

A cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was signed April 16, 2013 at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi. On the Russian side the document was signed by the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation **Sergey Donskoy**, and from UNEP by the Executive Secretary of the organization, **Achim Steiner**.

Steiner thanked the Russian side for the invitation to participate in the environmental component of the 2014 Olympic Games in Sochi and the GEF project Arctic Agenda 2020. In turn, the head of Russian Ministry of Natural Resources said that the cooperation in the environmental field does not end with the Olympic Games, and in general he was satisfied with the results of the joint work.

Donskoy stressed: *"The signing of the agreement opens up new opportunities for expanding cooperation and implementation of programmes and projects in the most needed areas."* The head of Russian

Ministry of Natural Resources praised the involvement of UNEP in the joint project with the GEF, Arctic Agenda 2020.

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

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## ***Swedish-Russian cooperation in the field of environmental protection***

At the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources a meeting has been held on the project "Development of cooperation in the framework of the Convention on long-range transboundary air pollution (UNECE Convention)". The event was part of the Work Programme of the Russian-Swedish cooperation in the field of environmental protection April 16, 2013.

The meeting participants discussed the results of the project "Strengthening cooperation in the framework of the Convention on long-range transboundary air pollution - CLRTAP". The aim of this project is to implement the integrated model GAINS (Greenhouse Gas and Air Pollution Interactions and Synergies model) - an officially recognized mechanism for evaluating scenarios of environmental policy implementation in terms of protection of atmospheric air under the UNECE Convention on long-range transboundary air pollution in the national environmental protection practice of the Russian Federation.

The parties have analysed the potential use of the GAINS model in environmental practices at the regional and federal levels in the Russian Federation. The project "Strengthening cooperation in the framework of the LRTAP" is carried out by the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources (technical partner: NII Atmosphere) and the Environmental Protection Agency of Sweden in the framework of bilateral environmental cooperation. At the end of the meeting, the Russian-Swedish cooperation in protection of the air was summed up, and proposals from the parties on further cooperation in the project "Development of cooperation in the framework of the Convention on long-range transboundary air pollution" examined.

On the Russian side the talks were attended by representatives of the Ministry of Natural Resources, the research institute on atmospheric air "NII Atmosphere", the Federal State Statistics Service, the Centre for International Projects, and from the Swedish side by representatives of the Swedish Environmental Research Institute.

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

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## ***Softwood crisis in North-western Russia***

At the Arkhangelsk Forestry Forum conservation organizations expressed the need for urgent action on the transition to intensive sustainable forestry to avoid losing the forest industry in the region.

At the round-table discussion on the resource, economic and environmental aspects of forest planning and design of the Arkhangelsk region forestry, representatives of federal and regional forest management, timber companies, environmental and scientific organizations discussed the current situation in the forest sector of Arkhangelsk region and the development of the industry.

At present, the limit of available forest resources in the region is fully depleted. According to environmentalists, the remaining softwood timber to meet the needs of enterprises is not enough even for the next five years. The companies, who find themselves on the brink of survival, are forced to engage in turnover even the last remaining old-growth forests with global conservation value. At the

same time, because of the remoteness of the remaining forest areas the cost of the wood increases, while its quality leaves much to be desired. By logging in old-growth forests, the companies also shut themselves out from the environmentally sensitive markets of Europe. This is the result of many years of pioneering development of forest areas, based on felling all new arrays of naturally grown forests and which is, essentially, an analogue of one-time mining.

Environmental organizations - WWF Russia, Greenpeace Russia, etc. as the only possible option for the development of forestry consider the introduction of an intensive model, which provides for the development of forestry towards lands the easy-to-use and capable of providing high gain through effective reforestation, care and conservation of forests from losses due to fire, pests and diseases. The primary measures specifically for the Arkhangelsk region, according to environmentalists, should be no new production capacity for pine and the introduction of relief measures on harvest of hardwood, and also more flexible rules of thinning in secondary forests of the Srednetaiga forest region.

It is important to keep the last native taiga forests, creating new protected areas (PAs). According to the head of the Agency for Natural Resources and Environment of the Arkhangelsk region **Kirill Sinitsky**, the costs of operation of protected areas in the region is 8 rubles per ha, and the total amount of funding is 15 million rubles. This is much less than the possible financial losses in the region, in the case of reviews of certificates of responsible forest management at forestry enterprises due to logging in valuable forests and the loss of European markets.

*"Dynamic development of the regional network of protected areas (PAs) and correctly placed priorities - that is the key to quickly finding a compromise between the use and conservation of old-growth forests. Today this is not only an environmental, but also an economic necessity,"* said **Andrey Shchegolev**, head of the Arkhangelsk branch of WWF Russia.

One of the points of the resolution of the roundtable was to establish a working group to develop a network of protected areas of regional significance on the forest lands of the Arkhangelsk region, which will include representatives of all stakeholders. Among the priorities is also the development of the regional law on specially protected natural territories of the Arkhangelsk region, reflecting the creation of protected areas of regional significance and reserving land.

Source: Press Service of the WWF Russia.

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## ***New head of the Federal Forestry Agency***

On April 17, 2013, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Sergey Donskoy presented **Vladimir Lebedev** as head of the Federal Forestry Agency (FFA). The new FFA head will retain the position of Deputy Minister in charge of the formation of public policy and regulation in the field of forest resources, as well as hunting and wildlife.



Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation Sergey Donskoy and Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation - the head of the Federal Forestry Agency, Vladimir Lebedev.

*Photo: Press service of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment*

The order on expanding the powers of Vladimir Lebedev was signed April 15, 2013 by the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev.

Introducing the new head of the Federal Forestry Agency, Donskoy said: "Plenty of unsolved issues have accumulated in the industry. Therefore, today it is necessary to build an effective system that would quickly begin to address them. Vladimir Albertovich is an experienced and caring manager who is familiar with the challenges currently facing the timber industry. I am sure he will succeed in his new position."

The environmental community reacted positively to the appointment of Vladimir Lebedev as head of the department. According to Yevgeny Schwartz, director of the environmental policy of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the arrival of a new leader will lead to a more open dialogue with the large wood business, and the transition to the intensive model of forest management will be accelerated.

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

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## ***Forest management: Sweden's experience is Russia's interests***

Is the Swedish model one of the possible ways of developing forestry in Russia? WWF now presents a film about a unique approach to sustainable forest management in Sweden. From April 9, the WWF channel at Youtube broadcasts the documentary **Intensive forestry - the Swedish model**, shot by the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and translated into Russian by WWF Russia.

Swedish forests account for about 1% of the world's forests. However, 5% of the world's timber is harvested in Sweden, accounting for 10% of the turnover of international trade in wood. How is this possible? The answer to this question lies in a unique approach to sustainable forest management.

The film tells the story of the difficult road of developing the intensive forestry model in Sweden from a model narrowly designed to achieve economic benefit to a system of managing forest landscapes conducive to meeting the modern society's social, environmental and economic needs for forests.

At present, the Russian forest sector is experiencing an increasing need to shift from the extensive forest management model, which is based on constant development of new forest areas and with a predominance of clear-cutting, to sustainable use of forests.

Extensive development has led to a degradation of forest resources, which means a change from , from the economic point of view, valuable conifer forests, to low-value deciduous forests, destruction of the last areas of old growth forests, and loss of biodiversity. Due to lack of available raw materials, many forest product companies in North-West Russia are already on the brink of survival. This causes them to pave the road to the remaining areas of native forests and to rent protected forests for wood production. *"An alternative to extensive forest management is the model of intensive forest management - this is the path Sweden went. ... We hope that the Swedish experience will help Russia to establish an efficient, environmentally sustainable and socially responsible forest management, while avoiding the mistakes of its northern neighbour and one-sided development of the intensive model,"* said **Nikolay Shmatko**, WWF Russia's forest policy coordinator.

Source: Press Service of WWF Russia.

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