

Education for Sustainable Development: Russian-Swedish Project

RUSSIAN SUSTAINABILITY NewsLETTER



Special Issue. October 2012

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Opening on October 24 the first meeting of the Presidential Council for economic modernization and innovative development of Russia, created in June this year, **Vladimir Putin** referred to the new instruments of innovation policy. Among them, he recalled the so-called technology platforms (TP) created to coordinate the activities of business activities, education, research institutions and government agencies. 30 such TPs have been approved. The President expressed the hope *"that this area will be developed, that we will feel its development."*

The main purpose of setting up the TAs is to form a mechanism to improve the efficiency and competitiveness of the economy of the Russian Federation, based on coordinating the efforts of science, government, business and society in implementing eco-efficient and energy-saving Russian technology, solving the accumulated environmental problems, as well as ensuring environmental safety.

A number of the technologies developed in the TA, correspond to the List of "critical" technologies of major socio-economic importance or great importance for the country's defense and security (approved by the Federal Government), including technologies as: monitoring and forecasting of the condition of the atmosphere and hydrosphere, resource assessment and forecasting of the lithosphere and biosphere, processing and utilization of man-made formations and waste; reducing the risk and consequences of natural and technogenic disasters, environmentally safe resource-saving production and processing of agricultural raw materials and food products, environmentally safe mining; safe management of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel; protecting and ensuring the livelihoods of the people and dangerous objects at threats of terrorist activity.

Many of the mentioned technologies correspond to the thematic areas of "green economy" named among the development priorities in the outcome document of the Rio +20 conference "The future that we want". This document suggests leaving unsustainable consumption and production structures in favor of sustainable ones, which actually means a transition to a "new use of natural resources" that is the basis for the forming of a new technological order, the most science intensive one in history.

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National Environmental Program for 2012-2020

The Russian government has approved the state Environmental Protection program for the years 2012-2020, developed by the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. The Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation, **Sergey Donskoy**, presented the draft state program at a meeting of the Russian government on October 18, 2012.

During his presentation S Donskoy said: *"The document is intended to form the basis for solving the key environmental issues and the transition to sustainable development. The state program links into a single system both the regulatory measures aimed at economically stimulating environment-oriented "green growth", and practical measures to improve the environment. "*

According to S Donskoy, important areas of the program are: regulating the quality of the environment, conservation and development of biodiversity, development of the systems for hydrometeorology and environmental monitoring, operations and scientific research in the Antarctic. Through the implementation of the state program by 2020, compared to the base year 2007, pollutant emissions and the amount of waste generated per unit of GDP will be significantly reduced, and the number of cities with high and very high levels of air pollution will decrease by 2.7 times.

Under the Program at least 10 priority projects for the elimination of accumulated damage will be carried out, for example, eliminating the unauthorized "Black hole" industrial waste dump and the "White Sea" sludge accumulator in the Nizhny Novgorod region, land reclamation of the Srednevolzhsky chemicals plant in Samara region, as well as projects on the elimination of accumulated environmental damage in the Arctic. Implementation of these measures will rehabilitate about 27 square kilometers of contaminated land, and improve the environmental conditions of the Russians.

Development of the observation network will increase the accuracy of regional daily weather forecasts to 93-95%. All cities with a population of over 100 000 people will have a system of air pollution observation. By 2020, it is planned to create more than 30 new nature reserves, national parks and federal reserves, and thus more than 13.5% of Russian territory will be occupied by protected natural territories.

The total funding amounts to 335.9 billion rubles. *"The implementation of the program will allow us to obtain tangible results for most indicators already in the medium term,"* said the Ministry head.

The Minister also informed the meeting participants that the program design took into account the strategic priorities set out in the Principles of the state policy in the field of environmental development of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030, the Strategy of innovative development of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2020, and also the activities of the Comprehensive program for biotechnology development in the Russian Federation for the period up to 2020.

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

VII All-Russian Congress of Geologists

In late October 2012, the VII All-Russian Congress of Geologists was held in the State Kremlin Palace in Moscow. The previous VI All-Russian Congress of Geologists was held in October 2008.

As part of the congress participants reviewed the results of the geology sector during the period since the VI All-Russian Congress of Geologists, the most pressing problems in the area of geological survey and mineral resources use, and discussed possible solutions.



The VII All-Russian Congress was attended by about 2000 delegates from 83 regions of the Russian Federation and 1,400 participants and guests of the congress - representatives of the academic, industrial and public geological organizations, federal and regional governments, as well as foreign delegations.

The Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation **Sergey Donskoy** held a speech to the congress participants. In his speech, the Minister stressed that the geological profession enjoys great respect in Russian society: *"It is the finds of the Soviet geologists that were the basis for the formation of the economy sectors providing energy security, financial stability and sustainable development for our country."* S Donskoy outlined the challenges facing the sector: preparing for the development of Eastern Siberia and the Far East as well as Russia's continental shelf.

On behalf of the Federal Agency for Subsoil Use, the head of Rosnedr **A Popov** in his opening remarks wished fruitful and interesting discussions to all the delegates and participants of the VII All-Russian Congress of Geologists. A Popov expressed confidence that the VII All-Russian Congress of Geologists would contribute to solving the most pressing problems that have accumulated in the sector today, the role and place of the mineral resource base of the country in the dynamics of modern Russia, defining a strategy for rational mining under present conditions, and that the active participation of all delegates in discussing the scientific and organizational activities would identify ways of further development of geology.

During the congress a press conference was held for the media, opened by the head of Rosnedr A Popov. After welcoming the participants of the press conference Popov stressed that the VII All-Russian Congress of Geologists aims to address a number of pressing issues facing the geology sector. Such as the problems of the development of legislation in the sphere of subsoil use, reproduction of the country's mineral resource base, financial and economic support and, finally, the problem of training geological personnel. The Rosnedr head stressed that the main role of the VII All-Russian Congress of Geologists is to stimulate dialogue between the geological community of the country and the government, to raise public and governmental awareness of the geological sector, which is of strategic importance for the country's economy. A Popov expressed hope that congress would emphasize the need not only to maintain but also increase the resource component in the country's geopolitical potential, the inadmissibility of Russia's withdrawal from the oceans, the Arctic and Antarctic, the protection of national interests on the adjacent shelves.

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

Negotiations with the OECD

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has held a meeting with a delegation from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The talks were held under the leadership of Acting Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation **Nikolai Popov** and Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment **Rinat Gizatulin**.

The meeting participants discussed the results of the OECD representatives' mission in Russia. The mission included the heads of the OECD secretariat and experts from the U.S., France, Germany, Norway, Sweden and Hungary.

As part of an inspection tour the experts visited a number of enterprises in the Sverdlovsk region and Yekaterinburg, including JSC Sredneuralsky copper plant, JSC Pervouralsk pipe plant, Shirokorechensky ground for storage and disposal of solid waste and MUP Water canal in Yekaterinburg.

The OECD delegates held talks with the leadership of the government and the legislative assembly of Sverdlovsk region, Yekaterinburg city administration and a number of meetings with regional business associations and the public.

The Delegation head, Director of the OECD Directorate for Environment, Simon Upton said: "This trip was very important to us. We would like to understand in practice the position of Russia on joining the OECD. This is not simple ticking, but a process of making recommendations on the basis of a detailed study of the Russian legislation and its implementation."

During the meeting, the experts presented the outcome of their visit and discussed with representatives of the Russian side issues concerning integrated water resource management, processes for assessing impact on the environment and damage to the environment, urbanization and waste management. Special attention was paid to the state legislative activity in the field of ecology, the interaction of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment with other agencies and financial support to environmental programs.

Acting as official spokesperson of the Ministry of Natural Resources at the Ministry of Economic Development and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for cooperation with the OECD, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Rinat Gizatulin said that Russia is interested in joining the OECD: *"This will increase the value of environmental conservation assets, makes it possible to coordinate economic policy with other developed countries"*. He also informed the meeting participants that the Russian Federation is taking a systematic approach to the harmonization of environmental laws with the regulations of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development."

In the talks participated directors of departments of the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment, deputy heads of Rosprirodnadzor, Rosvodresursy and Roshydromet, representatives of the Ministry of Economic Development, and the State Duma of the Russian Federation.

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

XIV International Forestry Forum

The XIV International Forestry Forum was held in St. Petersburg on October 2-3. The forum brought together more than 300 representatives of the forestry business, scientific, educational and community organizations, institutions of forest management from all over Russia, and also from Sweden, Finland and other countries. Issues discussed were the forest policy of Russia, joining the WTO, forest ownership, intensive forestry, improvement of vocational education and many others.

In the opening words of welcome to the participants of the Forum initially sounded familiar figures showing the "boundlessness" of Russian forests, the "inexhaustibility" of forest resources and their insufficient use by the forest business. However, in her speech at the plenary session **Elena Kulikova**, Head of the Forest Program of WWF-Russia, pointed to the limited forest resources due to natural factors and the extreme exhaustion of economically accessible forests.



"The boundless forests of Russia is a myth. The business' increasing competition for economically accessible forest resources is leading to increasing pressure on protective forests and forests near large cities, as well as old-growth forest areas," Elena Kulikova said in her speech at the forum.

Photo of WWF России / Denis Dobrynin

The most heated discussion was on the issue of private ownership of forests. "Private ownership of forests cannot be avoided" sounded in the statements of some participants. "It is terrible to imagine that Russian forests will soon be privatized" said others. *"One cannot live guided by the extremes, having only private or only public ownership of forests. There are "intermediate" forms, including responsible management,"* said **Sergei Zimin**, Deputy Plenipotentiary Representative of the President in the Northwestern Federal District.

Heated discussions were going on at the roundtable on forest policy of Russia, organized with the participation of WWF Russia and the draft text of which was published and widely discussed. *"Russia's forest policy should not be a "declarative" document, but a true constitution for the forest sector in the country, approved by the President or the Government, and which would determine the direction of improvement of the Forest Code and other forestry and related legislation, forest management practices,"* said **Nicholai Shmatkov**, Coordinator for WWF Russia's forest policy projects, who lead the roundtable.

The participants of the discussion stressed the need for the forest policies to take into account regional and local characteristics of our great country. *"Regarding management of forests near large cities, specific requirements should be formulated in Russia's forest policy, taking into account their social and environmental significance,"* said **Yevgeny Trunov**, chairman of the Committee of Forestry, Moscow region.

The roundtable participants also agreed on the need for greater discussion of the draft document. *"We need to attract a wider range of professionals and ensure maximum consideration of all proposals received,"* said **Yuri Gagarin**, head of the Department of state policy and regulation in the field of forestry at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. An important aspect of Russia's forest policy is to improve forest management practices, which is now unthinkable without intensive forestry. Another round table organized with the assistance of WWF was devoted to this subject.

"It is important to avoid the mistakes of foresters in Sweden and Finland, which in the pursuit of economic efficiency in their time "forgot" about the social and environmental values of forests, and are now making great efforts to regain the lost biodiversity in forests," Elena Kulikova said in her speech.

The participants of the round table also talked a lot about the imperfection of the legal framework, which does not make it possible to conduct forestry in Russia in cost effective manner. "The standards for cutting for intermediate use must be reasonable and economically feasible," said **Boris Romaniuk**, scientific director of the WWF Pskov Model Forest project and the Green Forest Foundation.

Source: WWF Russia

Meeting of the Public Council under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

On October 26, 2012 a meeting of the Public Council under the Ministry of Natural Resources of Russia was held. The enlarged Council was attended by Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation **Sergey Donskoy** and Minister of the Russian Federation **Mikhail Abyzov**.

In his opening speech M Abyzov noted that he is participating in the Public Council for the first time and stressed that the Council should be a popular platform for the discussion of bills. Let us recall that the Ministry of Russia was one of the first ministries included in the formation of institutions and mechanisms for open government.

During the meeting, the Director of the Department of state policy in the field of geology and mining at the Ministry of Natural Resources **Alexey Oryol** reported on the State program prepared by the Ministry, "Reproduction and use of natural resources" for the years 2012-2020. The program includes the subprograms "Use of water resources", "Reproduction of mineral resources, exploration of mineral resources", "Reproduction and use of game resources".



In the presidium of the meeting of the Public Council: Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Russia **Sergey Donskoy**, Chairman of the Public Council under the Ministry of Natural Resources of Russia **Nikolay Kasimov** and Minister of the Russian Federation **Mikhail Abyzov**.

Photo by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

The objectives of the State program are sustainable provision of the economy of the country with 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 preservation, reproduction and rational use of hunting resources.

The meeting reviewed draft federal laws amending the RF Law on subsoil resources. According to A Oryol, "The purpose of the proposed amendments to the introduction, is to specify the terms of licenses for subsoil use, to regulate the process of amending the license, specify grounds for termination of subsoil use rights, including early rights, suspension and limitation, streamlining of tenders and auctions for subsoil use, and the introduction of norms that encourage processing of extracted minerals in Russia.

The Director of the Department of State Policy in the field of hunting and wildlife at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment **Anton Bersenev** reported at the meeting of the Public Council on the draft Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation on federal state hunting supervision. The document defines the rights of officials in charge of hunting supervision, delineates its implementation between legal entities and individual entrepreneurs and citizens, as well as between the federal body of executive power and the state authorities of the Russian Federation subjects.

The Chairman of the Public Council under the Ministry of Natural Resources of Russia, Dean of the Faculty of Geography at Lomonosov Moscow State University **Nikolay Kasimov** said that in order to improve effectiveness of the Council it is necessary to create working groups to better manage the drafts and more carefully study feedback received.

Summing up the meeting, S Donskoy urged the department directors to make a detailed analysis of the proposals prepared by the Public Council.

The event was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, heads of subordinate services and agencies, the Public Chamber of Russia, Greenpeace Russia, WWF Russia, the Public Fund "Citizen", Lomonosov Moscow State University, the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS), Gubkin State Oil and Gas University and other public environmental organizations.

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

Roshydromet's new ship

Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation **Sergey Donskoy** has taken part in the ceremony to hand over the research vessel (RV) "Akademik Treshnikov " to Roshydromet. The solemn flag-raising ceremony on board was chaired by Prime Minister **Dmitry Medvedev**.



The icebreaking vessel "Akademik Treshnikov" (pictured) is named after the famous Soviet scientist (1914-1991), President of the Russian Geographical Society.

"Akademik Treshnikov" is the first RV built in Russia in the last 20 years. The new ship, commissioned by Roshydromet, will play a leading role in the new transport scheme of naval operations of the Russian Antarctic expedition, developed in accordance with the objectives of the Strategy for the Development of the Russian Federation's operations in the Antarctic for the period up to 2020 and for the longer term.

The ship is designed to carry out Russian Federation field research and work of in the Antarctic, including the maintenance of activity of the Russian Antarctic stations and field bases, their logistics, delivery of fuel and food, changes of wintering and seasonal personnel of the Russian Antarctic Expedition.

As said the head of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Sergey Donskoy, *"Commissioning of the new research vessel will strengthen Russia's position in the Antarctic - expand research, continue to modernize and upgrade the infrastructure of the Russian Antarctic expedition. Thanks to the work of the vessel "Akademik Treshnikov", the Russian side will have new opportunities, in particular for the adoption of additional measures to implement the requirements of the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty."*

The ceremony was also attended by the first vice-president of the Russian Geographical Society, the Russian President's special representative for international cooperation in the Arctic and Antarctic, Artur

Chilingarov, the head of the Federal Service for Hydrometeorology and Environmental Monitoring Alexander Frolov, the Director of the Arctic and Antarctic Research Institute of Roshydromet Ivan Frolov, the General Director of JSC Admiralty Shipyards Alexander Buzakov and others.

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

The Minister of Natural Resources visited the AARI

On October 10, 2012, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Sergey Donskoy visited the Arctic and Antarctic Research Institute (AARI), located in St. Petersburg. During his visit, the Ministry head was acquainted with the main activities of the Institute, visited the laboratory of climate change and the environment (LICOS) and the O Schmidt Russian-German laboratory for polar and marine research (OSL).

As part of their presentation, the LIKOS experts reported on the studies of subglacial Lake Vostok, its hydrology and the ice cores from the superdeep borehole.

We remind that in February 2012, Russian scientists drilled a 3,768 feet deep borehole and were able to penetrate into the subglacial Lake Vostok. In the coming years, special sampling equipment, hydro-physical and biochemical probes will be lowered into the relict lake water. The study of this unique body of water that has been under four-meter thick ice for millions of years, plays an important role in creating a natural climate change scenario for the next millennia.

The OSL experts reported on their activities related to the coordination of research, analytical analysis of processing expedition samples of water, sediment, biota, sediment columns, and holding school-seminars. They also reported on the co-operation with the A Wagner Institute for Polar and Marine Research (Germany) and the Centre for Marine Sciences (Germany) on marine and polar research in the framework of the Laptev Sea System program.

This program brings together masters, researchers, graduates of higher education institutions, and graduate students who have successfully cooperated with senior scientists of Russia and Germany, working on problems of mutual scientific interest.

Following the visit to the AARI, the Natural Resources Minister Sergey Donskoy, said: "The establishment of such laboratories and active cooperation between countries is an effective tool for the development of science and makes a significant contribution to the development of a new generation of scientists and researchers in the Arctic."

The event was attended by Advisor to the President, the Special Representative of the President on climate issues Alexander Bedritsky, first vice-president of the Russian Geographical Society, the Russian President's special representative for international cooperation in the Arctic and Antarctic, Artur Chilingarov, Roshydromet head Alexander Frolov and others.

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

UNEP Award to Russian Ministry

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation has been awarded the Medal of Honor, established by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), in recognition of merits in protection of the Earth's ozone layer.

The awarding was held in Istanbul on October 11, 2012 during a regional meeting on customs cooperation in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia in the field of prevention of illegal movement of ozone-depleting substances across borders in the region.



The Ministry's efforts in the fight against illicit movement of ozone-depleting substances were also awarded a Certificate of Merit, founded by the Vienna Convention for the protection of the ozone layer and its Montreal protocol, UNEP and the World Customs Organization.

Photo by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation

During the award ceremony, it was noted that the Russian Federation is a leader among the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia in the field of prevention of illegal movement of ozone-depleting substances across national borders in the region.

In particular, in the period 2010-2012 the countries' cooperation through the regional ozone network allowed for 17 successful seizures. 72 pieces of equipment and 3,016 cylinders and refrigerant containers that contained 61 metric tons of ozone-depleting chemicals and mixtures were seized. Sixteen illegal shipments that contained 342 metric tons of ozone-depleting chemicals and mixtures were prevented.

The seminar was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Federal Customs Service of Russia, as well as participants from China, the European Union, Finland, and the international organizations of the UN system.

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

Sports and Sustainable Development

At the end of October a 3-day seminar was held in Sochi for heads of regions, departments and agencies involved in the conduct of major sporting events. The event was called "Megaprojects in the sport: the potential for sustainable development." The seminar was organized by the Russian International Olympic University (RIOU) together with the Lomonosov Moscow State University and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) with the support of the Organizing Committee for Sochi 2014 and the Sochi city administration. The project was implemented within the framework of Russia's preparation for the Winter Olympic Games of 2014.

The purpose of the seminar was to promote increase of the sustainable development potential of regions implementing mega sports projects by forming special skills to manage their key players. The program was developed by leading Russian and foreign experts in the field of sports management and sustainable development. Academic supervisor of the project was MSU prof. Y Mazurov.

The seminar provided the participants unique opportunities of receiving "first-hand" information of value to professionals, strategic planning skills in the implementation of mega sport for sustainable development of the regions, the establishment of occupational exposure to world-class experts,

representatives of state and business structures of the country. The seminar also offered a thematic tour of the Olympic sports facilities for 2014.



Photo by RIOU / Alexander Smirnov

In total the seminar was attended by over 30 experts from the regions of Russia - from the Far East to Central Russia. The training sessions were held by RIOU rector prof. L Belousov, Director of the Institute for Sustainable Development of the Public Chamber Russian Academy of Sciences member, prof. V Zakharov, MSU professors V Baburin and Y Mazurov, teachers of George Washington University (USA) J Bliss and prof. Lisa Neyrotti, Senior PWC officers Hazem Galyalem, L Nissenboym, E Otnelchenko, S Sirotenko and K Khudenko, representatives of the Sochi 2014 Organizing Committee and the Administration of Sochi. At the conclusion of the seminar, the participants received a RIOU certificate.

The seminar was the first public education effort in Russia to demonstrate the potential of sport as a factor for sustainable development of cities, regions and countries. The participants expressed their views on the advisability of making this pilot project into a permanent structure of the integration of sport into economic and social development.

Source: Own information
