



Regional Environmental Policy and Civil Society

C O N T E N T S

3	The Role Of The Universities In The Development And Implementation Of Regional Environmental Policy
	A.M. Adam TOMSK OBLAST
3	
	G.E. Mekush KEMEROVO OBLAST
5	
	D.B. Gelashvili NIZHNI NOVGOROD OBLAST
7	
	A.G. Kornilov, A.N. Petin BELGOROD OBLAST
9	
11	Environmental Economics
	S.N. Bobylev ECONOMICS AND ECOLOGY IN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION
11	
	G.E. Mekush PRIORITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IN THE REGION: KEMEROVO OBLAST
14	
	Yu.O. Gorshkova SCIENTIFIC AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO BUILDING A SYSTEM OF SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS: KALUGA OBLAST
16	
21	Environmental Law
	M.I. Vasilieva STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AS PART OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW
21	
	M.I. Vasilieva MUNICIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL
24	

SAINT-PETERSBURG

A.S. Karpov, M.Yu. Shchelgacheva
USING INTERNET RESOURCES FOR MONITORING
THE EFFICIENCY OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

A.S. Karpov
ECOM CENTER FOR EXPERT ADVICE: EXPERIENCE
IN CAPACITY BUILDING FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

VORONEZH OBLAST

V.M. Labzukova
AT THE VORONEZH CENTER
FOR ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

NIZHNY NOVGOROD OBLAST

D.B. Gelashvili
THE PRIVOLZHSK CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENT HEALTH

CHUVASH REPUBLIC

O.T. Alekseeva
CAPACITY BUILDING FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
IN THE REPUBLIC OF CHUVASHIA

KEMEROVO OBLAST

E.V. Perfilieva
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN TOWN-PLANNING ACTIVITY

N.V. Sudakova, E.V. Perfilieva, and E.F. Telgerekov
REGULATIONS FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS
IN TOWN-PLANNING ACTIVITIES

E.F. Telgerekov
THE ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION AGENCY
IS 10 YEARS OLD

TOMSK OBLAST

Back 1992, prior to the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro, the Tomsk Oblast Soviet of People's Deputies adopted a concept, which complied with the principles of sustainable development and was based on attaining a balance among three elements: the economy, the environment, and society. It was implied that the concept would be put into practice via implementing the regional environmental policy. The Oblast Environmental Program was one of the fundamental documents adopted at that time. Subsequent expansion of the theory and practice of sustainable development made it possible to define more clearly the areas and forms of implementation of environmental policy in Tomsk Oblast.

Today, by an environmental policy we mean a set of official views, principles, priorities, and actions of the state to harmonize the socio-economic development of Russia in general and its territories while meeting the environmental interests of society.

The key tasks of environmental policy are, first, protecting the health of this and future generations from adverse environmental factors; second, assuring nondepletive, sustainable use of natural resources; and, third, building capacity for Russia's sustainable development and environmental safety.

Of vital importance in the development and implementation of environmental policy is staff training and work with the general public.

The centerpiece of successful implementation of environmental policy is interaction among Tomsk administration and higher educational institutions. There are 7 universities and 17 ecological departments in Tomsk Oblast. All the environmental departments of the seven higher educational establishments are integrated in a general system for implementation of environmental policy, which was jointly developed by experts from the Department for Natural Resources and Environmental Protection and Tomsk State University. This is necessary in order to ensure that the staff training should follow along the same strategic line in spite of the hallmarks of each department.

In 1995, an Environmental Management Department was established at the International Faculty of Agriculture, Nature Management, and Environmental Protection. The object of the department is to train personnel to deal with environmental protection and nature management. The uniqueness of this department is that it is located in the premises of the Department for Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Tomsk Oblast Administration. About 60 percent of training courses are given by Department for Natural Resources and Environmental Protection professional experts. Some courses are given by members of the Center for Environmental Audit and Management and the Center for Radiation Safety, which makes allows the students to collaborate with practical professionals and write their term and graduation papers based on practical materials.

**Of vital importance in the development
and implementation of environmental
policy is staff training and work
with the general public.**

The department provides for several education levels:

- Baccalaureate on Ecology and Nature Management – a four-year training course certified by a corresponding diploma;
- Standard training for five years giving an Expert Degree;
- Postgraduate education on two three-year training courses: Ecology and Nature Management and General Ecology;
- Second higher education for 2.5 years to obtain additional theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the areas of environmental and economic analysis and environmental management.

A high-grade training of specialists of various levels is ensured through teaching a wide spectrum of general and special courses.

In the educational activity, emphasis is laid on those courses that are aimed to train managerial staff in the sphere of nature use and environmental protection, among them Environmental Protection Management; The Theory of Sustainable Development of Nature and Society; Environmental Policy and Institutes; Environmental Security; Pollution Monitoring and Control; and Environmental Expert Review and Environmental Impact Assessment.

The Environmental Management Department at Tomsk State University organizes research and development (R&D) activities. In 1998, the department opened postgraduate and Baccalaureate courses. For ten years of existence of the department, its lecturers have published more than 380 papers, including 25 monographs, and have defended 2 doctoral and 5 candidate theses.

The Environmental Management Department experts have developed original programs for such lecture courses as Environmental Management; Environmental Audit; Environmental Policy and Institutes; The Theory of Sustainable Development; Environmental Insurance; Regional Ecology; Urban Ecology; and others.

Since 1995, the Environmental Management Department has arranged 10 big R&D expeditions (including international) to taiga and special protected areas in the territory of Tomsk Oblast.

For the time of the Environmental Management Department existence, students have written and published more than 200 scholarly papers. Among ecology students, there have been Soros and President's scholarship holders, winners of All-Russian competitions and Olympiads, and ones who got the title of the Ecologist of the 21st Century.

The Environmental Management Department is an associated member of the UNESCO Center for Chemistry and Education.

The effectiveness of the system for implementation of environmental policy developed is corroborated by the fact that the graduates from ecological departments of Tomsk higher educational institutions work in federal, oblast, and municipal authorities, public organizations, consulting companies, R&D institutions, educational establishments, and industrial companies in various Russian regions.

There is an efficient regional public organization Tomsk Environmental Student Inspection named after Lev Blinov, which was established on the Environmental Management Department and Department for Natural Resources and Environmental Protection basis to assist students in their self-training. The inspection includes students from all Tomsk higher educational institutions. This makes it possible to take effective practical actions and implement environmental policy in all Tomsk universities as an initiative from the grassroots. Students are involved in environmental control (including combating poaching), environmental education and training, the study and conservation of biological diversity, protection of forests and reforestation, and preservation of rivers and water protection zones.

The system of implementation of environmental policy in the sphere of education functioning in Tomsk Oblast fully complies with the objects of sustainable development in the Russian Federation and may be used as a model for dissemination of positive experience.

A.M. Adam

Head of Department for Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, Tomsk Oblast Administration

KEMEROVO OBLAST

The transfer of the focus of socioeconomic reforms to the regions demands that the administration should establish a state-of-the-art model for managing the Kuzbass (Kuznetsk Coal Basin) economic complex based on a sustainable nature use and the conservation of the environmental quality. The environmental aspect becomes a real hindrance to integration processes and socioeconomic progress. The short-term economic benefit in preference to the search for solutions of social and ecological problems is a threat to the region's progressive economic growth and future development.

Today, the environmental factor is actually limiting the economy of Kemerovo Oblast, especially, in terms of its investment appeal and involvement in international and interregional partnerships. For example, the oblast's environmental appeal ranks 79 among all Russian constituents. That is why the development of a concept for Kemerovo Oblast environmental policy has been a very timely, important arrangement.

The primary task of environmental policy in the region is overcoming the adverse effects of production deecologization and building capacity for stabilization of the environmental situation during the recovery from the economic recession.

The transfer to sustainable development, building, and, especially, implementation of environmental policy can be practicable following a radical change in the world outlook, the system of social values, and the ideas of the development of the economy and civilization as a whole. Low-level environmental awareness and ecological culture decrease the population's activity in addressing environmental problems and enhance a threat of losing the environmental and cultural potential. Therefore, the concept for environmental policy in Kemerovo oblast emphasized a challenge to build a system of continuous environmental education, training, and improvement of ecological culture. The reasons behind this emphasis were as follows:

- Low level of environmental awareness and ecological culture;
- Low activity of the population in tackling environmental issues;
- Lack of a system of continuous environmental education, training, and improvement of ecological culture;
- Unavailability of a legal framework for environmental education and awareness building;
- Shortage of specialists in environmental education and awareness building.

To deal with the above-mentioned problems, priority fields were identified and implementation mechanisms were proposed. Universities play an essential part in the implementation of priority areas of environmental policy through training specialists and carrying out research in the environmental field. The leading higher educational institutions of Kemerovo Oblast are carrying out intensive work along this line.

Universities play an essential part in the implementation of priority areas of environmental policy through training specialists and carrying out research in the environmental field. The leading higher educational institutions of Kemerovo Oblast are carrying out intensive work along this line.

Establishment of a legal framework for continuous environmental education and training and ecological culture building

The integration of environmental education into the general system of education requires creating a legal framework, including at the regional level. Some lecturers and staff members of Kemerovo State University took part in the development of the Kemerovo Oblast Law on Environmental Education. Unfortunately, it has not been adopted yet. Active work on environmental education is underway at the Center for Continuous Education, Kemerovo State University. Schools and kindergartens with an environmental bias have been established. The system of continuous environmental education and training built on this base will make it possible to improve the activity of children and population as a whole in addressing environmental issues, reduce the threat of losing the region's environmental potential and cultural heritage.

Development of teaching methodological support for continuous environmental education and training

Now, Kemerovo Oblast lacks a system of teaching methodological support and needs development of the content and form of continuous environmental education and training for various groups of population. It is necessary to work out curricula and programs based on national educational standards with regional features, the level of ecological culture, and population awareness taken into consideration. The teaching methodological support should be based on the principles of continuity and scientific rationale and be sufficient and accessible for all social groups. The development, publishing, and integration of teaching methodological aids of an environmental bias into the educational process will allow us to radically change the world outlook, improve environmental awareness, and provide the population with reliable environmental information. Universities substantially contribute to the conservation of biodiversity. The efforts of Kemerovo scholars on publishing the Red Book of Animals and Plants obtained great recognition. The researchers were awarded high prizes of federal significance.

Training of specialists in the area of continuous environmental education, training, and culture

The shortage of specialists in environmental education does not currently allow us to build a system of continuous environmental education and training and to improve ecological culture. It is necessary to provide the organization and financing of training specialists on environmental education based on specialized secondary, higher, post-diploma, and additional forms of education. With sufficient number of experts with special ecological education, it will be pos-

sible to create a system of continuous environmental education and training and speed up the implementation of environmental policy in the region. So far, Kemerovo Oblast has had little experience in this area. One example is opening the Environmental Management specialty at the Department of Economics, Kemerovo State University, for students receiving a second higher education.

Expansion of the material and technical facilities for continuous environmental education and training and ecological culture building

The poorly developed material and technical basis of continuous environmental education and training (lack of books, visual aids, and demonstration materials and too low computerization of the educational process) does not make it possible to organize a full, timely training of specialists on environmental education or improve the environmental awareness of the population. The acquisition of environmental literature (especially, on regional subjects), demonstration and visual aids, materials, and devices by libraries and university laboratories will allow one to assure a state-of-the-art training of experts and enhance public interest in environmental issues.

G.E. Mekush

Assistant Professor, Kemerovo State University

NIZHNI NOVGOROD OBLAST

Early universities appeared in Europe more than 750 years ago. At that time, students and scholars could freely move and quickly disseminate their knowledge throughout the continent. Today, a great number of students complete their education without using an opportunity to receive education over some time outside the native country. This provision of the Sorbonne Declaration of May 25, 1998 emphasizes the central role of universities in the expansion of European cultural values. The declaration justifies the establishment of the European zone of higher education as the key means for the improvement of citizens' mobility and job placement opportunities as well as for the general development of the continent.

Global societal and economic changes necessitated setting the task of development of new effective methods for the organization and management of higher educational institutions. The view on universities began changing from the accentuation of their socioeconomic isolation to the search of features common with other organizations operating in the market conditions. A new concept – “entrepreneurial university” – was formed in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Western Europe.

The implementation of the globalization idea stated in the Sorbonne and Bologna declarations involves elaborating a regional aspect as one of concrete mechanisms. In the modern world, among three key functions of modern classical university – education, science, and capacity building for the region's development – the latter, that is, the interaction with the location area, is progressively gaining in importance. We will cite a pronouncement of former Russian minister of education V.V. Filippov: “If previously universities were blamed for being “ivory towers,” now all universities are looking for their niche in the region understanding that they may attract additional resources through interacting with the territories.

The realization of the importance of this process is embodied, in particular, in the Basic Guidelines of Activity of the Nizhni Novgorod University for 2003–2008: “The basic lines of university activity for the coming period are determined by modern trends in education, basic and applied research, building a knowledge-based economy in Russia, and the demands of the region and Privolzhsk Federal District. Today, the University of Nizhni Novgorod numbers more than 35000 students, lecturers, and personnel.

The capacity of universities in the development of the regions is presently considered along the following lines:

1. The university's contribution to the development of the region as a major employer. The university raises the level of employment of the population both through creating new jobs immediately at the university and by establishing new structures resulted from the expan-

In the modern world, among three key functions of modern classical university – education, science, and capacity building for the region's development – the latter, that is, the interaction with the location area, is progressively gaining in importance.

sion of functions of modern university (research and technology parks, spin-offs, and so on).

2. The university's participation in the economic development of the region may be considered in terms of its scientific potential. The reference is to technology transfer: the existence of research and technology parks, incubators, an invention patent system, and consulting services, that is, everything necessary for the assurance of close cooperation between the region's universities and enterprises.
3. Execution of professional education, including vocational training and continuous additional education. This activity represents the university's contribution to the development of human resources and consolidation of the regional human potential.

Consequently, modern society attaches special importance to the role of university as a regional leader responsible for the social and cultural progress of the region. The University of Nizhni Novgorod – the region's largest higher educational institution – takes an active part in addressing the socially significant problems of Nizhni Novgorod Oblast and Privolzhsk Federal District.

Thus, the Nizhni Novgorod University was the winner of the competition of projects in the sphere of institutional building in the agroindustrial complex organized by the Commission of the European Communities. This international project under the Tempus TASIS program is named "The Democratic Mechanism of Agricultural Development" and is essentially aimed to transfer knowledge on the principles of institutional development of the agroindustrial complex from West-European countries, which are more advanced in this respect, to the Russian Nizhni Novgorod region, which is now in the process of transformation.

Another example of the university's contribution to the regional cooperation is its partnership with the largest industrial facilities of the region in tackling critical environmental problems often leading to social tension. The knowing of big business and regional authorities that the scientific potential of the university is capable of addressing currently important tasks is an important socioeconomic factor of progress in the relationship of the university and the region.

Good illustrations of such partnership could be the participation of university ecologists in solving the problem of bark dump at Balakhninsk Paper Mill (OAO Volga); the analysis and optimization of waste handling based on the fuzzy-set theory at Gorky Automobile Plant (OAO GAZ); the development of

a methods for sewage load assessment in the oblast territory and water area using the theory of fractals; and others.

Modern intensively advancing universities are playing progressively more significant role in the regional development. Using its scientific potential and professionalism in the field of education, the University of Nizhni Novgorod is taking an active part in the processes of reformation and development of regional institutional structures, the building of a civil society, and the formation of democratic principles.

D.B. Gelashvili

Professor, Lobachevsky State University, Nizhni Novgorod

BELGOROD OBLAST

In the modern regional development, the key role in building the public outlook, in forming local public and political leaders belongs, as before, to higher educational institutions. They finalize the processes of socialization of individuals before the graduates begin their independent life. Without diminishing the role of school education, we would still emphasize that it is precisely at university that the new competent generation receives not just a body of knowledge but also skills of socially oriented behavior. This refers to all aspects of social life, including the formation of a responsible, environment-conscious public mentality.

Generally, issues of building and implementing environmental policy are not tackled purposefully at higher educational establishments – one would hardly find environmentally significant sections in their charters. Universities create an environment for a free exchange of the latest information that covers nearly every aspect of human activity, including issues of societal sustainability generally recognized as a top priority.

One example of such regional social leader in Belgorod Oblast is Belgorod State University (BelGU), which, by the energies of the university and oblast administrations, has been recently developing exactly as the university of the 21st century. The university's material resources are intensively improving. Exceptional comfortable conditions have been created for students and teachers to carry out productive research and training activities: new spacious halls of the scientific library, lecture and computer rooms, and laboratories equipped with the state-of-the-art facilities. All this allows the educational process to be accomplished at a prime scientific level. The key distinctive feature of Belgorod State University is its drive toward the future, where the individual is treated as the highest value.

BelGU demonstrates what can be done in the region through combining the synergies of all sectors of society. The new beautiful buildings on the university campus have essentially embellished the city. They were built on the resources remitted by physical and legal entities to the Trustee Fund headed by Oblast Governor E.S. Savchenko with support, included financial, by the Russian Ministry of Education. The BelGU capacity could be characterized as follows. There are more than 23000 students studying at 17 faculties. The university provides three forms of instruction: day, evening, and by correspondence. In compliance with the license, BelGU implements programs on 57 professions in 27 fields of higher professional education as well as on 52 postgraduate professions. Seventy six departments with more than 1000 instructors are involved in the educational process. The education provided by the university is on very high demand among the oblast's population, establishments, and organizations, for which BelGU trains professional staff.

The list of major BelGU educational programs covers 9 profiles: natural sciences and mathematics, humanities, pedagogical sciences, medical sciences and healthcare, service, technical profile (engineering), economics and management, transport and communications, and other fields.

Generally, issues of building and implementing environmental policy are not tackled purposefully at higher educational establishments – one would hardly find environmentally significant sections in their charters. Universities create an environment for a free exchange of the latest information that covers nearly every aspect of human activity, including issues of societal sustainability generally recognized as a top priority.

Consequently, the role of Belgorod State University in the building of an environmental policy is not always apparent due to the multidisciplinary nature of the institution, but, nevertheless, it is always quite significant and multifarious:

1. Like in the majority of Russian higher educational establishments, the federal and regional curriculum components for all specialties – humanitarian, natural-science, and engineering – contain compulsory disciplines of ecological (predominantly, environmental) orientation.
2. A rather high portion of students (up to 5 %) receives environmental and nature-management professions. For lecturing in this area, practical experts are widely engaged from environmental and natural-resources agencies, such as the Oblast Environmental Inspectorate, Rosprirodnadzor (Federal Supervisory Service for Nature Management) and Gosgortekhnadzor (Federal Service for Environmental, Technological, and Nuclear Control) divisions, research institutes, and others.
3. The Ecological Center for Education and Science established at the university implements special educational upgrading programs in a number of fields, for example, industrial waste handling and so on.
4. The university's high scientific and social status makes for extensive engagement and participation of BelGU staff in developing territorial environmental projects, regional regulatory acts in the area of environmental protection and nature management, and projects related to environmental impact assessment for industrial facilities. BelGU specialists provide expert support in state environmental impact assessments, environmental commissions of municipal entities, etc. As regards the most important ongoing projects, we would mention one on the establishment of a special protected area of oblast significance – Nezhgol National Park of Belgorod State University, which has been submitted to the Belgorod oblast government for discussion. The national park is contemplated to be an environmental and awareness-building establishment aimed to conserve typical and unique natural landscapes and to promote ecological tourism, scientific research in the environmental area, and so on.
5. From year to year, special environmental arrangements provided by the university, have not become less popular. These include the activities of voluntary environmental brigades, ecological subbotniks (voluntary cleaning on Saturdays) in partnership with the Oblast Environmental Inspectorate, holding conferences and seminars on profile and applied research subject of various levels (including for students).
6. The university exchanges state-of-the-art scientific and applied-research information through building partnerships with environmentally-oriented scientific and public organizations, such as the Institute of Geography, Russian Academy of Sciences; the Center for Russian Environmental Policy; and others.

Belgorod Oblast, the oblast's bodies of representative and executive power, and municipal administrations publicly declare that their chief policies are aimed at creating favorable living conditions for the population and ensuring a favorable environment. Despite the fact that there are still many problems to be tackled, the oblast looks positively on the general background of the Central Chernozem region regarding a series of important indicators, such as the number of unorganized dumps, the volume of untreated wastewater discharge, and the level of atmospheric pollution in residential areas.

When looking from the outside, it may seem that the administration's environmentally oriented policies and the university's environmentally significant actions are parallel forms of activity. It is not obvious which of them has a stronger influence on the final result, the implementation of the priorities of environmental policy. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that these are interrelated processes. They are gradually altering the public mentality. The more such examples in the regions, the more grounds we will have to oppose other, equally realistic and very strong processes that dominate in Russia's modern economic progress and determine the prevailing development of a resource-consuming, environmentally unsound national economy.

A.G. Kornilov

Professor, Belgorod State University,

A.N. Petin

Professor, Belgorod State University, Dean of Geological and Geographical Faculty

ECONOMICS AND ECOLOGY IN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

Massive efforts have been made in recent years to update the substance and structure of economic education. There have emerged tens of new economic disciplines to embody modern realities related, primarily, to the variation of the type of economic development and transfer to a market-based economy. A host of new books have been published and translated, including the best Western manuals. Russia's integration into the Bologna process made the formation of a two-cycle Bachelor–Master education structure mandatory.

All this has created an absolutely new environment in university education. Unfortunately, this new environment does not appear to favor environmental problems and generally nature management economics, which covers economic issues of environmental protection and the use of natural resources. With the onset of "pragmatic" economic disciplines concerned with finance, banks, business, and the like, students tend to view nature management economics as a "second-rate" discipline.

It would be difficult to discuss the change in the mentality of Russian students within a paper's limited space; yet, we should emphasize some general features of contemporary young people established in the course of abundant social research, namely, the devaluation of education and knowledge themselves, which is embodied in a drastic decline of the status of scholars and teachers in Russia, and, at the same time, the distinct orientation of young people to getting a good education as a means for ensuring a successful career and prosperity.

To some extent, ignoring environmental disciplines is also observed at the Russian Ministry for Science and Education, as judged from the state of speciality standards and education in general. In the majority of universities, the Nature Management Economics course and similar economic ones are in the background.

The availability of a host of economic disciplines with a well-developed theory and, in some cases, a comprehensive, advanced mathematical tool creates illusions of understanding and possibility to manage economic processes. Unfortunately, this fails to comply with Russian and planetary realities.

Global economics has led to critical problems in the existence of humanity itself, and economic theory has proved be powerless to prevent and solve them. Here, we may point out only global economic problems essentially generated by uncontrollable human-induced economic actions. I will just mention the problem of global climate change, which has drawn careful international attention and yielded a great number of publications. Consequently, the development of our civilization is unsustainable and in the future we may face global crises in various spheres – environmental, economic, social.

From the theoretical point of view, many environmental and economic problems were generated by the so-called "market failures" and

The discussion on promoting university education with the environmental factor taken into account, which began in the bulletin of the Center for Russian Environmental Policy Towards a Sustainable Russia, may provide a good groundwork for consolidation of university forces in the environmental sector of higher educational institutions, establishment and improvement of training courses, and lobbying of environmental interests at the Russian Ministry of Science and Technology.

“ineffectiveness of the state policy” – phenomena that are well known in science. I would emphasize three outstanding critical problems, which the traditional market economy failed to solve:

- Undervaluation or lack of price of many natural resources and services. There is a lamentable rule of a market-based economy: That what has no price does not exist and is not taken into account in economic decision-making.
- The pendency of the problem of externalities (external effects) – uncompensated actions of one party on another.
- The complexity of accounting long-term implications of decisions made and the short-term vision of the market regarding the consideration of the time factor.

The suspension of these problems makes the world economic process unsustainable.

In this connection, I would like to share problems and possible solutions based on my experience in teaching environmental and economic disciplines at the Faculty of Economics, Lomonosov State University, Moscow.

Now, three ecology-oriented courses are given at the faculty, namely, Nature Management Economics for bachelors, Sustainable Development for masters, and Environmental Project Analysis for bachelors and masters. The basic current manual is a book by Bobylev, S.N., and Khodzhaev, A.Sh., *Nature Management Economics* (Moscow: INFRA-M, 2004). Also, there has appeared a tutorial by Bobylev, S.N., Girusov, E.V., and Perelet, R.A., *Sustainable Development* (2004). One of the latest publications to be mentioned is a tutorial by Bobylev, S.N., and Gritsevich, I.G., *Global Climate Change and Economic Development* (2005), which was Russia's first publication in the field of environmental and economic education.

An important object of the Nature Management Economics course, which is embodied in its structure, is the presentation of nature management economics in terms of macroeconomic positions, which distinguishes it from many Western and domestic courses in nature management economics based on microeconomics. Of fundamental importance for economies in transition and transformation is the variation of the traditional paradigm of nature use and environmental protection and the realization of the impossibility of addressing environmental issues without an environmentally sound restructuring of the whole economy. The case in point should be a peculiar “macroeconomics of nature management.”

The soundness of this approach in the course can be corroborated by analyzing the formation of a technogenic type of development in the world and

studying its limitations due to the depletion and degradation of natural resources and the assimilation limits of the environment. In this connection, a critical aspect is the introduction of the concept for sustainable development as the centerpiece, a through majorant of the course, within the framework of which the need to alter the modern economic models of individual countries and entire humankind is substantiated.

Of great importance in economic courses is the “instrumentality,” the introduction of measurable indicators of efficiency, numerical indicators, etc. To this end, for the first time in the Russian economic theory of nature management, sustainability indicators and their use for measuring the sustainability or antisustainability of development are discussed in detail. Also, the disadvantages of the gross domestic product, which in countries with great natural capital generally grows based on nature degradation, are shown and the United Nations and World Bank's sustainability indicators are analyzed.

The training courses provide an extended treatment of the notion of natural capital and analysis of its resource and ecosystem components. Actually, traditional economic theory treats just one function of natural capital – providing the economy with natural resources. Meanwhile, it is evident that progressively more importance is now attached to three other functions: ecosystem services that ensure nature's regulatory and assimilation functions; “spiritual” functions related to esthetic, ethical, moral, cultural, historical, and other aspects; and promotion of human health that is progressively more exposed to environmental pollution.

A pioneer feature of the Russian course and many countries' manuals is the use of a natural-product verticals (chains) methodology that relates primary natural resources with the final results of the target-program approach. Another pioneer feature is the application of a sectoral approach (the agroindustrial complex, the heat-and-power engineering complex, the forest sector, and others) as distinct from conventional approaches that discuss the economics of individual natural resources.

The authors' primary goal was to “monetarize” the courses, to apply widely price and economic evaluation notions, and to use profit-and-loss analysis and project analysis tools for substantiating theoretical grounds and conclusions. This is of fundamental importance for the economic courses, the substantiation of the effectiveness of economic ecologization and transfer to a sustainable development, and the proof of competitiveness of environmentally friendly projects. This idea is embodied in the thesis “What is ecologically sound is economi-

cal." The focus is on the consideration of methodologies for assessing the economic value of natural resources and services, in particular, to the concept for total economic value (cost).

Among the fundamental features of the course, I would emphasize a thorough analysis of the topics of the state and the market, their "failures," and the necessity of adequate adjustment measures. In this connection, the topic of externalities (external effects) has become a priority.

An essential feature of the course is discussing broadly factual and statistical materials and concrete situations. This enables the students to understand better basic theoretical principles of nature management economics, be more actively involved in original research, take part in seminars, and communicate with the lecturer. To this end, we specifically use boxes to describe particular situations and examples. Many such boxes are used throughout a number of topics of the course. Here, we should mention boxes dealing with the impact of global environmental problems on human health, indicators of sustainable development, Lake Baikal, and so on. For example, the crisis of the Aral Sea is used for generalizing theoretical approaches in the course (macroapproach, neglect of the environmental aspect in economic development, natural and product chains, and the effect of economic assessment of natural resources on decision-making).

When developing and lecturing our courses, we took into consideration advanced experience in the field of university teaching of environmental and economic disciplines in the world. Of great service in the preparation of the courses was the European program Tempus, in which the Faculty of Economics of Lomonosov State University, Moscow, took part in 1994-1995.

Contacts with Tilburg University, where Environmental Economics is a principal course, were especially effective. For subsequent expansion of the courses, of much value was a project under the Subloan Agreement between the National Training Foundation and Moscow State University (2002-2003), which was implemented within the framework of the World Bank's loan for the promotion of Russian education.

Some trips were made with consultations held at the London Economics School, Tilburg University, and Sorbonne University, Paris. In the course of these trips, many English, Dutch, and French universities were visited and leading professors consulted with. Specifically, there were very fruitful meetings with Professor D. Pierce (Great Britain) – a leading European expert in developing and lecturing environmental economics who has authored manuals

that are acknowledged worldwide and published in many countries.

It was valuable for the authors of the Russian course to get approval and support of its basic concept, substance, and structure from leading European experts. The trips, consultations, and library work allowed University lecturers to adopt recent European theoretical developments and methodological features and innovations in the field of environmental and natural resources economics.

The discussion on promoting university education with the environmental factor taken into account, which began in the bulletin of the Center for Russian Environmental Policy Towards a Sustainable Russia, may provide a good groundwork for consolidation of university forces in the environmental sector of higher educational institutions, establishment and improvement of training courses, and lobbying of environmental interests at the Russian Ministry of Science and Technology.

S.N. Bobylev

Professor, Moscow State University;
Expert, Center for Russian Environmental Policy

PRIORITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IN THE REGION: KEMEROVO OBLAST

Kemerovo Oblast represents a typical raw-material region with marginal types of specialization of the economy. The gross regional product cost is primarily obtained at the expense of fuel and energy and metallurgical complexes. The environmental aspect is now a limiting factor for the region's further development and integration into the international and interregional economic space. This became especially important in connection with the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol and the contemplated prospect to join the World Trade Organization. The development of the concept for environmental policy in Kemerovo Oblast was determined by a number of reasons:

- High anthropogenic load on the territory of the region;
- High urbanization of the territory;
- High portion of pollution-related sickness rate;
- The prospect of economic restructuring and the transfer from raw-material specialization to innovation management, and so on.

For the first time in Russia, this document was approved by the executive power following massive discussions with the public. The concept for environmental policy laid down its principles, challenges, and priorities for implementation. The specific feature of this instrument is that it provides the mechanisms and indicators for implementing environmental policy. The logical continuation of this effort has been the development of sustainability indicators for Kemerovo Oblast. Russian experience in developing sustainability indicators covers Tomsk and Voronezh oblasts, Moscow, and other constituents.

As distinct from them, Kemerovo Oblast proposed three systems of indicators that may be used for assessing both the trends in the regional socioeconomic development and the quality of economic progress and the state of natural resources. Our analyzing the socioeconomic development in the region using sustainability indicators has revealed antisustainable trends with the signs as follows:

- Lack of the signs of economic restructuring;
- "Improper" investment in the raw-material sector;
- An annual 10% gross regional product loss due to environment-related morbidity;
- Extensive damage to the future economy; and other trends.

The key priorities for environmental policy in Kemerovo Oblast were identified as reducing the energy intensity of the economy and transfer to an innovation way of development. It would be naïve to believe that these challenges could be met in the near decade. Transformation of this kind demands serious substantiation and research. The fact is

Russian experience in developing sustainability indicators covers Tomsk and Voronezh oblasts, Moscow, and other constituents. As distinct from them, Kemerovo Oblast proposed three systems of indicators that may be used for assessing both the trends in the regional socioeconomic development and the quality of economic progress and the state of natural resources.

that, as shown by Russian and foreign experience, this is accompanied by financial and social crises. It is foreseen that in the short-term outlook, a series of substantial studies should be conducted in Kemerovo Oblast.

First, to substantiate the opportunities of the assimilation potential, a competition of research papers on measuring the ecological capacity of the territory has been announced. This is necessary to estimate what possible volumes of coal stock may be extracted without causing considerable damage to the environment.

Actually, the environmental factor is now limiting the economic advancement of the region. The investment attraction of the territory is declining for all economic branches, except coal industry. Grave damage is being done to the future economy: disturbed and polluted lands are growing in number, the biological diversity is being considerably degraded, and the region's recreational capacity is diminishing. Besides, the share of the environmental factor in the sickness rate of the population is increasing, with the related damage to the regional economy running up to 4-10% of gross regional product.

The task faced is to estimate the level of coal production without impairing the reproductive capacity of ecosystems. This is "golden rule" of nature management is very difficult to attain in actual practice. The problem is that when staking on the mineral resource industry, it is virtually infeasible to issue the challenge of conserving the ecological balance of the territory. New, nontraditional approaches to economic development and environmental rationale are needed.

Another fear of no less importance for regional authorities is the limitation of economic expansion in the region in connection with the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol and the outlook to join the World Trade Organization. Kemerovo Oblast leads among all Russian constituents in greenhouse gas emissions, and a growth in coal production would just exacerbate the existing situation.

A program has been drawn up to establish a special economic zone based on innovational technological restructuring of the Kemerovo oblast economy. This necessitated carrying out research on issues and prospects of the development of Kemerovo Oblast Following the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol and the accedence of Russia to the World Trade Organization.

The cut in coal production will pose a problem of filling the regional budget – an alternative to the raw-material sector is requisite. To this end, a

market appraisal of other elements of the natural-resource potential needed. This is especially important for areas where coal industry is unavailable at the moment. The value cost estimation is also necessary for developing a compensation mechanism for the disturbance of land, forest, biodiversity, and so on by mine working. The current year has been declared in Kemerovo Oblast as Year of Ecology, and this gives us hope that at least part of projected arrangements will be accomplished.

G.E. Mekush

Assistant Professor, Kemerovo State University

SCIENTIFIC AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO BUILDING A SYSTEM OF SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS: KALUGA OBLAST

When implementing the concept for sustainable development, it is important to identify the most informative indicators of sustainability in order to assess how the region’s development complies with the criteria and principles of sustainability.

It has become generally recognized that the economic, social, and environmental aspects of sustainable development should be considered as an integrated system. Hence, sustainability indicators should embody these three essential components of the progress of modern civilization. Also, they should play a key role in the description (diagnostics) of the condition of the Nature – Population – Economy system and provide possibilities for correcting this condition [1].

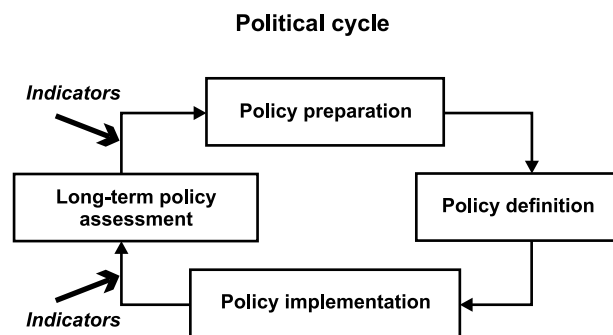
Sustainability indicators are quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the criteria of sustainable development. The set of indicators allows one to estimate the trends in the development, which correspond to a particular criterion.

Sustainability criteria are strategic lines of practical activity aimed to implement the accepted principles of sustainable development. Each criterion may be estimated by a totality of indicators that characterize it.

Indicators differ from other elements of numeric information in that they are elements of a management process. They are intended for the use in decision making [2].

Indicators are applied for measuring, monitoring, and following up the achievement of sustainability goals. They may serve as an information basis for assessing the efficiency of environmental and socioeconomic policies conducted and a tool to support planning and decision-making processes in capacity building for sustainable development. The top priority is attached to those sustainability indicators that are integrated into a political process (cycle).

A system of indicators for assessing the sustainability of Kaluga Oblast (the regional level) is being developed at the Botany and Ecology Department of Tsiolkovsky State Pedagogical University, Kaluga, as part of a project entitled “Conceptual Approaches and Capacity-Building Mechanisms for Sustainability in Russia and Russian Regions in the Age of Globalization” supported by the Russian Foundation for Basic Research. A methodology for identification of sustainability indicators with the region’s features taken into account has been developed, offered, and approved.



Analyzing the host of papers published on issues of the substantiation and choice of sustainability indicators shows that in the world, there are developments and proposals on methods for selecting indicators for systems of various scopes: global (international), national, regional, local, sectoral, and even for single settlements and

enterprises [3]. However, identifying and building systems of sustainability indicators for individual regions remains problematic because of the unavailability of a unified scientifically substantiated national methodological framework.

A system of indicators for assessing the sustainability of Kaluga Oblast (the regional level) is being developed at the Botany and Ecology Department of Tsiolkovsky State Pedagogical University, Kaluga, as part of a project entitled "Conceptual Approaches and Capacity-Building Mechanisms for Sustainability in Russia and Russian Regions in the Age of Globalization" supported by the Russian Foundation for Basic Research. A methodology for identification of sustainability indicators with the region's features taken into account has been developed, offered, and approved.

The devised methodology essentially includes two stages:

- Justification and identification of indicators for evaluating the sustainability of Kaluga Oblast;
- Historical (retrospective) analysis of Kaluga Oblast development to corroborate the current importance and adjust the selected indicators of sustainability.

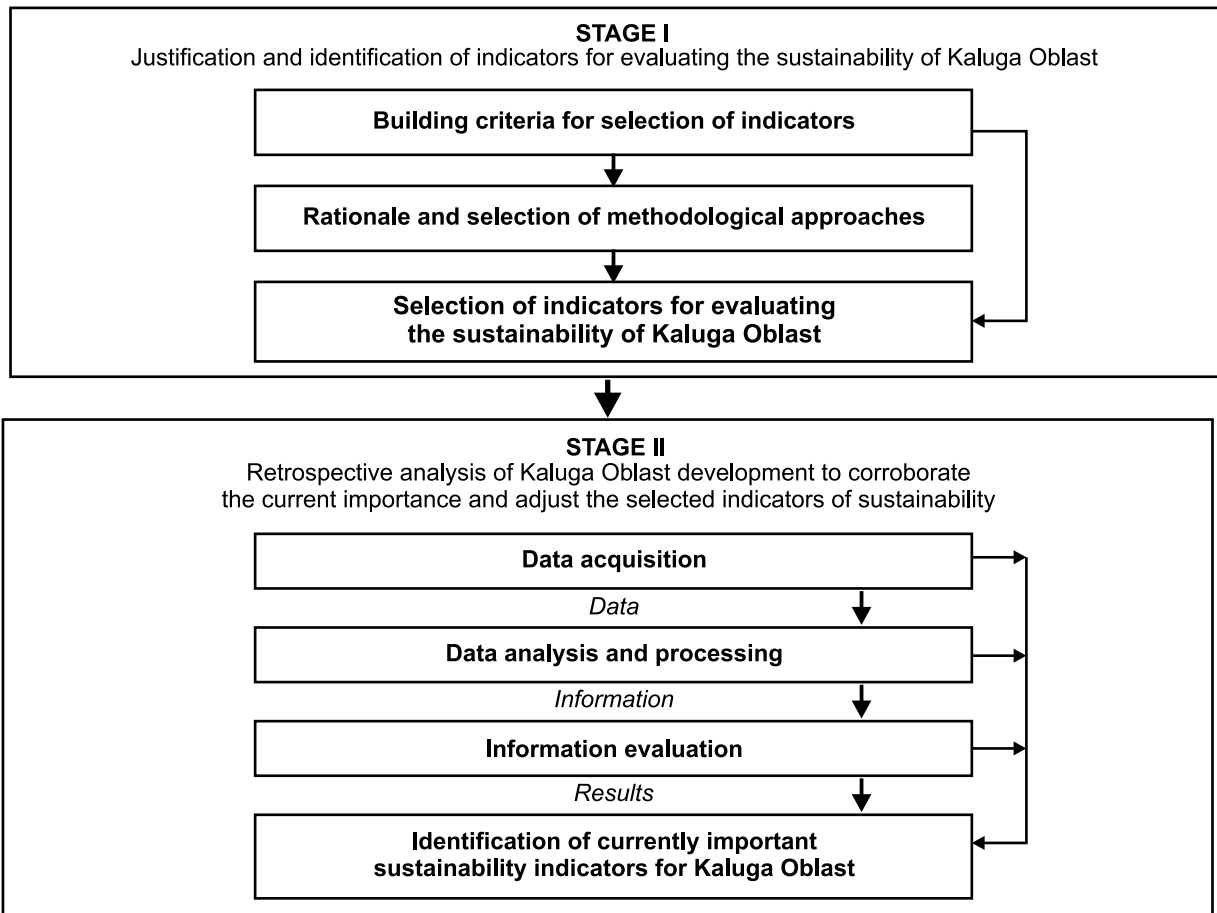
Justification and identification of indicators for evaluating the sustainability of Kaluga Oblast

1) Building criteria for selecting sustainability indicators for Kaluga Oblast.

It is foreseen to use three basic criteria as follows:

- acceptability for decision making
 - (a) the indicator should play an effective role in tracking progress (regress) and encourage the users to respond to the realities it reflects;
 - (b) the indicator should characterize the course of evolution in time, the degree of sensitivity to variation, and the trend (positive or negative) of ongoing changes and it should without fail be accompanied by the assessment of what is at the bottom of its dynamics;
 - (c) the indicators should be informative, easy to understand, helpful for the users, and easily available (for example, using the tools of statistics and graphic data presentation);
- analytical importance

Stages of development of sustainability indicators for Kaluga Oblast



- (a) the indicator should be theoretically substantiated from the scientific point of view;
- (b) the set of indicators should comply with international (global) approaches, requirements, and standards;
- measurability and reliability
 - (a) The information basis for obtaining (identifying) sustainability indicators should be available government statistics and formal departmental data;
 - (b) the choice of indicators should be based on the availability of appropriate data; the reliability, accuracy, and fidelity (double check for the same result, or validation from two sources) of information; the reflection of the real situation in respect of the issue under consideration; frequent data collection; and time coordination.
- 2) Rationale and selection of methodological approaches for developing Kaluga Oblast sustainability indicators.

Taking into account the oblast's features, the following approaches were chosen as the methodological basis for building a system of sustainability indicators for this region:

- geocosociosystems approach, which implies the compatibility of the region's economic development with its natural potential, compliance of the processes of natural and socioeconomic systems, and the use of environmentally sound, nature-consistent technologies;
- biotic regulation and environmental stabilization theory, according to which the top priority in the system of environmental indicators is given to ones that characterize the condition of natural ecosystems and biological diversity (the proportion of area taken by natural ecosystems in the total area of the region should be sufficient for ensuring adequate regulation of the environment, its stability, and adequate rates of restoration of conservation of natural ecosystems);
- load – condition – response approach (developed by the European Union and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) is based on the causal effect concept: human activities result in environmental loading (pressure) and change the quality of the environment and the amount of natural resources ("condition"), to which society responds by conducting environmental, economic, and sectoral policies ("societal response");
- key/basic, additional, and specific indicators, – an approach involving classification of all indicators by priority level and regional specificity;

- subject/problem – indicator – this approach, which was proposed by the United Nations Organization and the World Bank, implies that the criteria for selecting indicators are important problems related to the protection of the environment and sustainable nature use at the global, national, and regional levels;
- creation of integral (aggregated) indicators that make it possible to compare and correlate individual enterprises, regions, and countries and are aimed at improving the management for sustainability purposes.
- 3) Selection of indicators for evaluating the sustainability of Kaluga Oblast.

It is clear from the above-listed methodological approaches that the top-priority indicators for assessing the sustainability of Kaluga Oblast are ones reflecting the state of the environment and nature use. They cover the area of ecosystems and special protected areas undisturbed by economic activity; the level of utilization (consumption) of natural resources; the rate of depletion of natural resources stock and the rate of variation of biological diversity; the pollution of natural environments (air, water, soil, and plant life); the arrival and accumulation of industrial and domestic wastes; and inflicted and prevented environmental damage.

During the progress of this effort, the indicators of sustainable development and nature use of Kaluga Oblast were classified into main groups as follows:

- Indicators related to the condition and protection of land resources;
- Indicators related to the use of natural resources and protection of minerals;
- Indicators related to the use, condition, and protection of surface and subsurface waters;
- Indicators related to the condition and protection of the atmospheric air;
- Indicators of forest use sustainability;
- Indicators related to the condition and protection of flora and fauna;
- Indicators related to the formation, use, disposal, and processing of production and consumption wastes.

For each group, concrete sustainability indicators were presented in line with chosen approaches. Thus, for example, to assess the sustainability of water use and the protection of water resources in Kaluga Oblast, the following indicators were proposed:

- Diversion capacity for industrial and domestic needs;
- Subsurface (artesian) and surface water intake ratio;

Supplement. Water use sustainability Indicators for Kaluga Oblast

№	Problem	Indicator	Sustainability indicator rationale		Rank of indicator
			Value of indicator	Dynamics	
Indicators of loading on water resources					
1	Depletion of subsurface waters and degradation of the environment	Proportion (%) of water intake from subsurface sources of water supply in overall diversion	63.8 %, or more than 4 times higher than that average for Russia (13.4%)	Reduction for 1995 to 2003 from 64.8% to 63.8% (positive change)	●
2	Diversion from subsurface sources of water supply for industrial purposes	Proportion (%) of drinking-quality water from subsurface sources in overall industrial water supply	60.4%, or twice as high as Russian average (30-40%)	Increase in 2003 by 10.1% against the 1998 level (negative change)	○
3	Irrational water use	Percentage of irrevocable water loss in overall diversion	13,9 %	Increase for 1995 to 2003 from 8.6% to 13.9 % (negative change)	●
4	Contamination of surface water bodies	Proportion (%) of waste water in the overall volume of discharge into surface water bodies	85.5 %, or more than twice as high as Russian average (36.2 %)	Growth for 1995 to 2003 from 81.3% to 85.5% (negative change)	●
5	Contamination of water bodies	Per capita volume of waste water discharged into surface water bodies	107 cubic meters per capita	Negative change	●
6	Major contribution of housing and communal services in the contamination of water bodies	Percentage of polluted waste water discharged by housing and communal services in the overall volume of contaminated export	(1.2 times higher than average for RF Central Federal District)	Increase for 1998 to 2003 from 88% to 91.4% (negative change)	○
Water body condition indicators					
7	Water quality in main surface water bodies	Water impurity index (WII)	Rivers: Oka – from 1.33 to 0.91; Zhizdra –1.64; Ugra – 0.93; Protva – from 1.08 to 1.28; Bolva – 1.39; Ressa – 0.95	Improvement of water quality in the Ugra and Ressa rivers (Water Class II – clean) (positive change)	●
Societal response indicators					
8	Characteristics of water resources management	Volume of water saved through using recycling water supply and consecutive water recycling systems (% of water consumed)	77 % (142.09 million cubic meters)	For 1997-2003, the water volume dropped by 19.81 million cubic meters and that of water saved dropped from 84.5 % to 77 % (negative change)	●

Legend: ● key/basic sustainability indicators;
 ● additional sustainability indicators;
 ○ specific sustainability indicators.

- Volumes of surface and subsurface water resources consumed;
- Water consumption structures by economic sectors;
- Waste water volume discharged into surface water bodies;
- Qualitative composition of wastewaters discharged into water bodies: treated in compliance with existing standards, insufficiently treated, and as is (contaminated but not purified);
- Overall discharge of pollutants arriving in water bodies with waste water;
- Water body impurity index (WII);
- Treatment coverage ratio;
- Volume and percentage of water saving in recycling water supply and consecutive water recycling systems;
- Per unit volume of costs of protection and reproduction of water resources.

Historical (retrospective) analysis of Kaluga Oblast development to support the current importance of sustainability indicators and adjust the selected ones

1) Acquisition of data related to selected indicators.

Our analysis was essentially based on 1995–2003 data, with some statistical indices taken for the last 5 years (1998–2003) due to the unavailability of official statistics.

Analyzing the development of nature use in Kaluga Oblast was essentially based on the following information:

- Data presented in the annual reports of Kaluga Oblast state environmental agencies;
- Compiled statistics of the Kaluga Oblast Committee for State Statistics of the Russian Committee for Statistics;
- Materials of annual State Environmental Reports of the Russian Federation.

2) Data analysis and conversion into information describing the region's development.

3) Assessment of information characterizing the region's development in comparison with the established sustainability criteria.

4) Identification and clarification of important

indicators of sustainability for Kaluga Oblast with selected approaches taken into account.

In compliance with the methodology developed, we identified indicators for nature use and the state and protection of water resources necessary to ensure sustainable development in Kaluga Oblast. Our retrospective assessment of the impact of economic activity on the water resources and the condition of surface and subsurface waters as well as our forecast of condition variation with allowance for technological, environmental, and compensatory arrangements allowed us to specify and indicate the most informative, currently important water use sustainability indicators for Kaluga Oblast (see the Supplement).

These methodological developments and proposals were included in the project named Development of a Methodology for the Environmental and Socioeconomic Rationale of Management and Protection of Water Bodies and Their Water Resources for the Planning of Economic Use and Protection and/or Rehabilitation of Water. The project was elaborated by EcoCenter Scientific and Technological Enterprise by request of Aquainfoteka Federal State Enterprise of the Russian Ministry for Natural Resources (State Order A.12.-03).

Today, based on the methodology developed, Kaluga Oblast sustainability indicators are being identified for other units.

The current importance, necessity, and timeliness of building a system of sustainability indicators for Kaluga Oblast comply with the provisions of the Concept for Improving the Quality of Life of the Population of Kaluga Oblast, which was approved by Ordinance of the Government of Kaluga Oblast No 42 of February 6, 2004. The concept, in particular, prescribes that "to manage the implementation of the program aimed at improving the quality of life of the oblast's population, an indicator management system will be integrated, including a system of indicators of socioeconomic development of Kaluga Oblast covering three basic units – the quality of life of population, the quality of the social sphere, and the quality of the environment, a system of indicator planning, and a control system".

The effort was financially supported by the Russian Fund for Basic Research (project No 05-06-80372).

Yu.O. Gorshkova

Kaluga State Pedagogical University

[1] The Strategy and Problems of Russian Sustainability in the 21st Century. Granberg, A.G., Danilov–Danilian, V.I., Tsikanov, M.M., and Shopkoev, E.S., Eds., Moscow: ZAO Ekonomika Publ., 2002, p. 414.

[2] Perelet, R.A., and Markandia, A., Identification of Sustainability Indicators, in: Nature Management for Sustainable Development, Yaroslavl: NPP Cadastre, 1997, pp. 24–39.

[3] Danilov–Danilian, V.I., and Losev, K.S., Ecological Challenge and Sustainable Development (manual), Moscow: Progress–Traditsia, 2000, p. 416.

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AS PART OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

Environmental policy may be understood in a broad context that combines, in a varying degree, its political, sociological, economic, and other aspects. Environmental policy as an area or type of policy in general may be regarded, for example, as a “conscious, organized control activity to regulate, through the intermediary of the state and public and, especially, political organizations, the public sentiment to nature in order to protect and develop the environment”¹.

The decisive role in building and implementing environmental policy belongs to the state. In this sense, environmental policy is a system of concentrated, scientifically grounded, and, to a certain degree, legalized ideas of goals, priorities, principles, substance, methods, and means of state environmental activity. According to the Russian Environmental Doctrine, the strategic goal of state policy in the area of environmental protection is conservation of natural systems, sustenance of their integrity and life-supporting functions for sustainable development of society, raising the quality of life, improvement of the health of the population and the demographic situation, and assurance of the country’s environmental security.

In the modern phase, with the ever increasing effect of environmental factor, environmental policy has become a separate line of state policy. The issue of availability of an environmental policy should not be confused with characteristics of this policy, for example, ineffective, inconsistent, or not quite equitable to public interests, because regardless of its drawbacks, one cannot deny the state environmental policy’s existence itself. Environmental policy occupies an intermediate position between practical environmental activity, which it guides, and environmental ideology, which it materializes (into a system of state functions).

In jurisprudential terms, environmental policy should be regarded not only in the context of ideological or activity-based characteristics of the state power proper but, undeniably, as the sphere of existence of law. The ground for this statement is the presumption that legal ideas comprising the deregulatory stage of law belong to the sphere of state (in this case, legal and environmental) policy.

Legal ideas (notions, concepts, and so on) are not included in “positive” law (legislation) and represent, in their diversity, the substance of legal awareness – a phenomenon of legal life interfacing with law but relatively independent of it. The immediate influence of legal awareness on the content of rules of law is that it provides material for genesis of law in the same sense and to the same extent as the law-maker takes into consideration behavioral standards and regulators existing in the public mind in the course of law-making.

Consequently, legal ideology as rational (prevailing, professional) legal awareness intersects with spheres of state legal and environmen-

The efficiency of state environmental policy directly depends on a biunique process that involves building a societal legal outlook based on the environmental demand and an environmental outlook including traditional legal values.

¹ Markovich, Danilo Zh. Social Ecology (Transl. from Serbian). Moscow, 1997, 359 pp.

tal policy, whereas legislation objectivizes in existing law those rules that have already been integrated into environmental legal policy and legal awareness.

From this point of view, environmental legislation acts as a form and means for implementation of state environmental policy. There is a great number of examples testifying to the dependence of environmental legislation on variations in political or economic policies or current needs of national administration, and this dependence is quite natural from the point of view of the above-mentioned correlation between positive law and environmental policy. In a sense, environmental legal rules serve as the marker of environmental policy of the state.

Despite the abundance of declarations about the adherence of the state to the improvement of environmental safety expressed in programming documents, the environmental laws of recent years give cause for stating inconsistency between what is named legal ideal and concrete rules of existing law. Moreover, in some areas, a departure from earlier adopted positions has been outlined². This applies to an even greater extent to law-enforcement and management practices.

No doubt, legal environmental awareness, legal environmental education have (must have) a reverse, formative effect on the state and its policy. When developing new rules, behavioral patterns of participants in social environmental relations, it is the vector of development of these relations that assigns law. Here, it is important to understand that conceptual and programming ideas related to the environmental policy of the state should already in the substantiation phase be taken as legal in their nature ("pre-legal") and, therefore, simultaneously subordinated to the logic of law development. Underestimation of the importance of this circumstance leads to reducing the juridical block of programming documents to a set of general wishes to improve the legal infrastructure and, as a consequence, to devaluation of the legal value of the concepts and doctrines thus broken from statutory acts that directly regulate social environmental relations.

Taking into consideration both types of the nexus of law and environmental policy, it should be born in mind that the state as the organization of public authority expressing the interests of society is to a decisive degree bound in its policy by social preferences. However, society itself is not yet ready to make its environmental interest the corner-stone.

The subjective ideas of the population about the quality of life fail to adequately include the importance of the environmental component, and society does not give the state due charge over formation of legal environmental restrictions and priority development of environmental legislation in general. In other words, the state policy is ecological just to the extent dictated by social interests.

It is necessary to purposefully correct the personal psychological perception of the value of the natural environment within the framework of cultural and educational component of the state environmental function through integration of environmental imperative demands into the system of motivation prerequisites of ecologically significant and any other behavior of man in the environment. This is critical for two priority categories – public officers who take environmentally sensitive decisions and the oncoming generation.

Raising public environmental awareness, which has been intensively implemented in recent years, has partly changed the sentiment of citizens towards environmental protection and their environmental rights, although not to the degree that would allow us to state noticeable changes. The overwhelming majority of Russians are indifferent to violation of their environmental rights every day and everywhere and thus demonstrate their environmental and, simultaneously, legal nihilism, which is additionally stimulated by failures of state environmental policy and prevailing inadequate human rights protection. It is symptomatic that the Russian Environmental Doctrine does not consider environmental education and building an ecological culture as priorities for the assurance of environmental safety.

²Thus, for a long time there has been no law on environmental charge. This leads to refusals to pay and inconsistent judicial practice.

Issues related to the delineation and execution of powers of state and local authorities in the sphere of environmental oversight are not adequately regulated.

Different laws show inconsistency in the legal regulation of waste import with the object of its disposal or neutralization.

The Federal Law on Environmental Protection shows less protectability, as compared to the previous law, in respect of the human right to a favorable environment. For example, the principle of priority of human life and health protection has been lost, and such civil rights have been eliminated as the right to protection of health from adverse environmental impact and compensation for moral damage as well as the right to demand reversal of a decision on siting, designing, building, and operating environmentally unfriendly projects, whereas the citizens' right to information about environmental conditions is limited to the place of their residence.

Legislative requirements to the assurance of radiation safety of the population have been reduced. It has been permitted to import in the Russian Federation of irradiated fuel rod arrays of nuclear reactors for their temporary storage and/or processing. Besides, it was earlier prohibited to site, design, and build nuclear power stations in highly populated areas; health-resort, recreational, therapeutic, and health-improving zones and sanitary protection districts; seismically dangerous areas; near major water bodies of republican significance; and in the areas of traditional mass-scale recreation and treatment, while the existing law fails to contain such prohibitions.

It is practicable to somewhat raise the significance of a favorable environment in the system of personal values of each individual by disseminating information about a direct, considerable impact of environmental aspects on people's health and well-being. In so doing, one should take into account variable human perceptibility to hypothetical threats and visible losses and focus on the material implications of environmental pollution, such as personal expenses on preventive health care and treatment, a decreased market value of property, and others. If people themselves intensify their actions to protect their environmental interests, the state and business groups will change their attitudes.

Today, it is the noncommercial sector that is carrying out the predominant part of awareness-raising work. Russian environmental NGOs possess a considerable scientific and creative potential and, when supported by the state, may achieve much more success through raising public environmental awareness and providing environmental education.

Although there is room for improvement, the Russian environmental legislation may be generally considered as sufficiently developed. The problem is rather in the fact that its regulative potential is far from being used in full. Any assessment of the laws in isolation from the environment, in which they are applied, will not be correct. On the background of recessionary phenomena in the Russian economy, growing criminalization of society, and general violation of people's social, labor, and personal rights, there has emerged a clear negative tendency – addressing a host of acute problems without taking into account the environmental aspect and quite often even in violation of environmental safety requirements.

We are facing deecologization of state policy, national economy, and public mind. The gap between the content of the rule of environmental law and the result this rule is aimed at, between the legal relationship model and actual social relationship is being increased. The influence of environmental policy on the effectiveness of law is unquestionable.

One critical condition for successfulness of environmental policy is the assurance of ecologization of existing legislation. An efficient tool for controlling the extent of greening of the rules adopted may be state environmental expert review of legal acts at all levels. To this end, it is necessary to amend the Federal Law on Environmental Review, because now non-regulatory acts of Russian constituents and legal acts of local authorities are not placed among expert review objects. Finally, it is of prime impor-

tance to begin conducting such expert review on a regular basis³.

Considering the specific features of Russian statehood, namely, the historical legal nihilism of the state and its citizens, we could state that national environmental policy based on ideological, scientifically substantiated recommendations on how to overcome the crisis, must, in addition, include a legal component.

It is quite obvious that an environmental strategy, which should in any case contain a demand of societal self-restriction, may succeed only when the law is observed. The condition of legality is a critical individual priority of development.

The government of law provides favorable conditions for ensuring public environmental interests – of course, provided the law itself is adequately ecological. Consequently, the efficiency of state environmental policy directly depends on a biunique process that involves building a societal legal outlook based on the environmental demand and an environmental outlook including traditional legal values.

M.I. Vasilieva

Professor, Moscow State University;
Expert, Center for Russian Environmental Policy

³ The Russian Forest Code, the Russian Water Code, the Federal Laws on Continental Shelf and on Division of Products, and all other regulatory acts, with rare exception, were adopted without environmental impact statement (see Recommendations of Parliamentary Hearings on the Improvement of Legal Support for Environmental Protection of May 16, 2000).

MUNICIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

Federal Law No 199-FZ on Amending Russian Legislative Acts Due to the Improvement of Delineation of Authorities of December 31, 2005 invalidated the rules of the Federal Law on Environmental Protection and the Federal Law on General Principles of Organization of Local Government in the Russian Federation that regulated municipal environmental control. At the same time, an amendment was introduced in Federal law No 184-FZ on General Principles of Organization of Russian Constituent Legislative (Representative) Government Bodies of October 6, 1999 (i. 6 of Art. 26.3) to the effect that local authorities may be vested with the right to exercise state environmental control by the laws of Russian constituents. Regional environmental control belongs to joint jurisdiction of Russian constituent government bodies and is exercised by these bodies independently from their own budgets. Such control is exercised at economic and other facilities irrespective of the form of property except facilities subjected to federal state environmental control.

Local authorities may be vested with the right to exercise state environmental control in accordance with the procedure envisaged in the Federal Law on General Principles of Organization of Local Government in the Russian Federation with allocation of necessary material and financial resources to local government bodies. The financial provision of delegated environmental oversight is ensured from subventions granted to local budgets from the constituent budget. Local authorities have a right to additionally use their own material and financial resources for exercising environmental oversight in the cases and in accordance with the procedure envisaged by municipal entities' regulations. A constituent law on vesting local authorities with the power to exercise state environmental control must contain a list of rights and obligations of the Russian constituent government bodies as well as a number of other provisions on the procedure for exercising delegated powers. It is essential that the delegated control does not become municipal and inherently remain a state control.

Local authorities may initiate constituent laws on vesting them with a right to exercise state environmental control. There has been no experience in passing such laws so far.

Local authorities may be vested with the right to exercise state environmental control in accordance with the procedure envisaged in the Federal Law on General Principles of Organization of Local Government in the Russian Federation with allocation of necessary material and financial resources to local government bodies.

M.I. Vasilieva

Professor, Moscow State University;
Expert, Center for Russian Environmental Policy

USING INTERNET RESOURCES FOR MONITORING THE EFFICIENCY OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

It would seem that the criterion of efficiency of any environmental strategy (environmental policy) is quite plain – the improvement of the state of the environment. In spite of the obviousness of the approach, this point of view has as many supporters as opponents. Immediate objections may be reduced to three aspects:

- The majority of significant environmental processes are extremely inert. It often takes decades to identify some trend.
- All environmental processes are derivatives of a great number of factors, and the contribution of a specific policy agent in the totality of these factors may be quite small.
- The scope of jurisdiction of policy agents is limited, while environmental problems have no administrative bounds.

Modern environmental policy is progressively more shifting to the space of “second derivatives” – attempts to manage socioeconomic trends that influence the state of the environment. The key concept of the European approach is the delivery of a policy developed by state policy makers to those numerous independent agents that must take part in the implementation of this policy. Among the latter are municipalities, enterprises, regional offices of government agencies, noncommercial organizations, citizens ...

The efficiency of environmental policy directly depends on the quality of delivery or, using market terms, the capability of the policy agent to “sell” it to important target groups. This includes overcoming interagency barriers, persuasion of legislators, awareness-building campaigns, and administrative pressure mechanisms. Unfortunately, the Russian practice is still far from being ideal, when the strategic program proper is developed together with its delivery instruments. The instruments of Russian environmental policy may be roughly divided into two groups: ones meant for the officials of the state machinery and ones for all others. Whereas the instruments of Group 1 are, although slowly, delivered to the place of application via vertical administrative relations, the laws “for the population,” as a rule, have to wait on the shelf until there occurs some enthusiast to press for their application.

Any expert may give tens of examples of “sleeping” rules in his/her sphere of competence, beginning with measures of administrative responsibility inapplicable because of a lack of prescribed authority of making up a violation protocol and ending with target programs not falling into the rules of the budget process. All these cases represent examples of a policy undelivered to the user.

Taking into consideration the aforesaid, it would be reasonable to look for some intermediate indicators, ones for the process of implementation of a policy to inform about what is happening in the sophisticated mechanics of social interactions – in the space between the law-making agency and the environment, the state of which should be improved.

The implementation of an environmental policy, like any other strategy, involves analysis, planning, carrying out, and assessment stages. The assessment of the effectiveness of a policy should be a guide for further actions. However, do we have enough instruments to assess the efficiency of the policy pursued? Besides, how often is the public opinion taken into consideration in the process of assessment?

When referring to the indicators, it is always necessary to remind that the indicator just signalizes about the condition of the system with a precision necessary for decision-making but does not describe the state of the system in every detail. For example, the red traffic light signalizes about such state of the transport system, in which the crossing of the intersection involves a risk of traffic accident. However, the traffic light indicates neither the traffic density nor the number of traffic accidents that have taken place here before.

Some indicators may have a precise scale, but this should not mislead the user in respect of what exactly is measured. The high temperature of a human body under the steady-state conditions is the indicator of some ill-being of the homeostatic system of the organism. One cannot believe that through using the thermometer we measure the illness or measure the organism. Accordingly, any treatment should be based on a comprehensive examination of the system rather than on a simple temperature measurement.

All the above pertains in full measure to the indicators of the efficiency of environmental policy. It is much easier to find an indicator that would show that something is happening than undertake a comprehensive study that would explain what exactly is happening. Anyhow, we may seek medical attention even when we just run high temperature. In the case of environmental policy, too, its revision may be initiated by the signals of ill-being.

Enumerating demands to the indicators has already become a banality. A good indicator should be informative, vivid, and cheap, and, in addition, it should ensure fast updating and storing long sequences of data. It is more difficult to develop algorithms enabling one to find easily indicators that meet these requirements.

The direct accounting of governmental agencies' policy-making activities (for example, the accounting of the number of by-laws adopted) seldom allows one to establish informative indicators. A good indicator should aggregate information produced by a great number of independent social entities acting in their own interests and relying on their own experience and own sources of information. Thus, the price of stocks in the stock market quite well reflects the economic situation (in contrast to government forecasts, which can be politicized), and bookmaker stakes in sports quite well reflect the teams' chances to win.

Paradoxically, the representativeness of an indicator (its capability to reflect the state of the system in general) depends on the variety of ideas and motivations of the "gamblers" rather than on the sociological representativeness of the sample. Also, the higher the stake (the price of a correct decision) for each of them, the more independent individual decisions and the more exact the aggregated estimate.

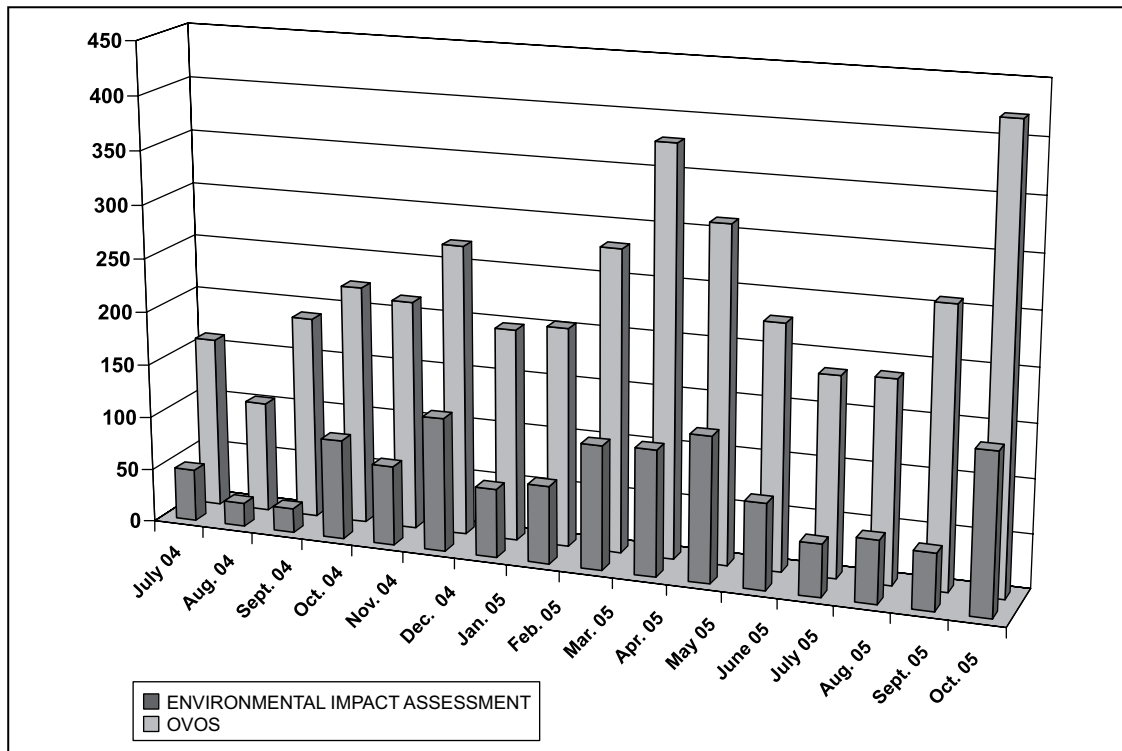
Out of a great number of candidates for a good measure of the efficiency of environmental policy, people's interest in its concrete instruments is nearly the most precise indicator and certainly a basic one. If information of ecologically certified products generates no interest among the general public or experts, it is safe to say that the stake on voluntary certification has failed. The lack of interest in national environmental reports is indicative of the fiasco of the information policy and public involvement strategies. One could say that the interest (curiosity) is far from being the only factor that should ultimately lead to projected improvements of the environmental condition. However, it is hard to argue with the fact that the instruments unnoticed by society will not work.

How can we measure the interest of society in available and newly offered instruments of environmental policy?

Fortunately, this is not so difficult and, possibly, even simpler than to discover the state environmental policy itself.

Every day, millions (!) of Internet users resort to search engines (Yandex, Rambler, Apport, and others) attempting to find some important information. Part of these queries may pertain to environmental data, environmental legislation, certification, or ecologically clean technologies – all the things that may be called instruments of environmental policy. When searching in the Internet, people spend money and/or time (if the usage charge is borne by the employer). These small personal expenses guarantee, to some extent, that there is more than curiosity behind such queries. Indeed, those who search for the word OVOS (Environmental Impact Assessment), for example, look for related items, such as sanitary protection zones, OVOS projects, OVOS guides for particular industries, software, SanPiNs (Sanitary Regulations and Norms), and others. Obviously, these queries are demonstrative of professional interest. A substantial portion of queries falls on OVOS paper, which betrays the interest of students (who may also search for The Principles of Environmental Expert Review or other materials for their papers). However, if the OVOS and environmental expert review procedures were not key instruments for the regulation of economic activity, they would be hardly paid so much attention in education courses.

In general, one could say that the motive of a particular query is of no importance. No matter who might stand behind a particular interest – a businessman, a journalist, a student, a scholar, a member of nongovernmental or governmental organization, or just a citizen – the increase in their total number testifies to the fact that such instrument as the environmental impact assessment is an important process from the point of view of a great number of independent specialists.



Dynamics of Yandex.ru queries of OVOS and Environmental Impact Assessment. The data are scaled to the total number of server queries.

On the contrary, the number of the National Environmental Report queries has invariably been zero in the last half a year. Without discussing the actual reason within the framework of this paper, we would just like to emphasize the indubitable benefit of these observations, because they give cause for analyzing the effectiveness of activities undertaken by responsible agencies.

The statistics of retrieval requests is available at many servers, and, therefore, the technical aspect of the monitoring process is not a problem. It is quite different with its tenor. To estimate the efficiency of environmental policy, one should first identify it in a very detailed way – via a list of queries regarding the document itself or the arrangements it provides for.

Such statement of the question in itself provokes a new insight into the process of development and implementation of environmental policy. Clearly, an instrument lying on the shelf at the department for environmental protection is not an environmental policy. It will not be one even if it represented at a press conference and announced in the media. One can state that a real environmental policy has been built only with the advent of inquiries like Results of Environmental Policy in N Oblast or Text of Environmental Policy, and so on.

However, the title of a document is far from being the only variant of a demonstrative key word. Such tools as the above-mentioned environmental impact

assessment and environmental expert review as well as environmental management, oversight, audit, and other tools should be included in a relevant query dictionary to be monitored on a continuous basis. Creating such a thesaurus is an important task for regional centers for environmental policy. This would stimulate practical discussions on issues related to the demand for one or another instrument.

The ECOM Center for Expert Advice uses this approach for analyzing the progress of processes of public participation in Russia. Today, the monitoring is conducted for 29 words (word combinations), the majority of which mean specific participation mechanisms. Based on the yandex.ru statistics, two intermediate indices are calculated – the diversity of inquiries and the intensity of inquiries, which are then aggregated into a single Participation Expansion Index (see www.ecom-info.spb.ru/index). However, the potential of the method exceeds the limits of this problem. Of course, considering that the implementation of environmental policy is society’s business rather than specialized governmental agencies’.

A.S. Karpov
 Director, ECOM Center for Expert Advice,

M.Yu. Shchelgacheva
 Probationer, ECOM Center for Expert Advice

ECOM CENTER FOR EXPERT ADVICE: EXPERIENCE IN CAPACITY BUILDING FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The ECOM Center for Expert Advice began operating in 1999 within the structure of St. Petersburg Society for Naturalists. The chief object of the ECOM establishment was promoting state-of-the-art managerial approaches in the environmental realm in Russia, among them environmental impact assessment, environmental management, sustainability indicators, Local Agenda'21, and others. The Center's current activity is focused on the problem of public participation in environmentally significant decision making. ECOM members are developing mechanisms for effective interaction of the public with authorities and business groups.

Over the last few years, the Center has been successfully realizing projects aimed to:

- Enhance the role of the public in preparing, making, and implementing environmentally significant decisions in the economic and social spheres;
- Elaborate methods and directly implement professional environmental and social impact assessment of plans, programs, and projects;
- Build partnerships of public organizations, businesses, and government agencies to meet common goals in the protection of the environment; introduce environmental management and eco-technology approaches;
- Develop a legal infrastructure to promote responsibility for environmental and socioeconomic impacts of decisions made.

The Center works along the following key lines:

- Introduction of improved methodologies and procedures for environmentally sound decision-making at the local and regional levels in northwestern Russia;
- Development of draft statutory acts to regulate public participation;
- Holding information campaigns, public hearings, and other arrangements;
- Protection of citizens' environmental rights (ad litem interest intermediation, providing advice);
- Consulting business structures and local authorities on issues related to the organization of public participation;
- Implementation of educational programs in the area of public participation.

ECOM innovations in public participation technologies

In December 2002, the Center, for the first time in Russia, implemented a procedure for Administrative Public Hearings, which was embodied in a regulatory act of the local government. Administrative hear-

The ECOM Center for Expert Advice began operating in 1999 within the structure of St. Petersburg Society for Naturalists. The chief object of the Center's establishment was promoting state-of-the-art managerial approaches in the environmental realm in Russia, among them environmental impact assessment, environmental management, sustainability indicators, Local Agenda'21, and others. ECOM's current activity is focused on the problem of public participation in environmentally significant decision making.

ings represent the best way of public return proceedings on the admissibility or inadmissibility of dangerous projects.

The ECOM Center was first in Russia to conduct Civil Hearings in February 2005. The hearings discussed some issues of forest management and counteraction to illegal logging in Russia. Civil hearings allow officials and policymakers to hear the views of the well-informed public activists and the arguments and position of responsible citizens regarding complicated and contradictory problems of social and environmental policies.

In June 2005, a distance civil conference was held in the settlement of Ob yachevo, the Republic of Komi. Jointly with the Silver Taiga Foundation, the ECOM Center is preparing a new technology for the municipal level. Distance civil conferences must improve the access of people living in rural and forest areas to public consultation provided by the authorities.

Now, the Center is drawing up a project Public Participation Development Index aimed to measure the population's level of interest in public participation programs. The indicators of the public role in forest management and environmentally significant decision making in industrial expansion are in the discussion phase.

Public Environmental Expert Review

The Public Environmental Expert Review (PEER) is one of the most serious tools for exercising the citizen's "right to know," that is, for receiving objective independent information. PEERs allow one to rate the merit of project documentation and make conclusions regarding possible environmental, social and ecological, and economic impacts of project implementation. PEERs combined with public hearings, information queries, and recourses to the Office of Public Prosecutor and court make it possible for citizens to exercise public control in the process of implementation of environmentally unsound projects.

ECOM's recent arrangements include

- Public oversight of the construction of the VAZ–VZPI aluminum plant in Vsevolzsk, Leningrad Oblast;
- Public oversight of the construction of the Etiketa label plant in Vsevolzhsk;
- Public oversight of the construction of the Tikhvinskii Ferrochromic Plant, Leningrad Oblast;
- Public environmental expert review of a project to continue Vitebskii Prospect down to Moscow Highway.

Protection of environmental rights

The ECOM Center is an active and professional defender of citizens' environmental rights. Experienced lawyers and legal counsels give consultations, help execute documents, and provide legal defense for civil rights and interests.

Development of regulatory acts

Rule-making is a key field of our activity. Among essential achievements, we may mention the development of the Law on the Procedure for the Participation of the Public and Public Organizations in Discussing and Making Decisions on Town-Planning in St. Petersburg, which was adopted in 2004. Also, ECOM experts played a leading part in the preparation of the St. Petersburg Law on Green Plantations.

Today, work on two bills – Public Green Plantations and Public Information about Environmental Expert Reviews of Draft Laws, Target Programs, and Regulatory Acts Planned and Currently Conducted in St. Petersburg – is in progress.

The Center's environmental layer heads the working group for discussion of the draft Russian Forest Code established under the Commission for Health and Ecology of the St. Petersburg Legislative Assembly.

The ECOM Center provides advisory support to the local authorities of Leningrad Oblast in developing draft rules of public participation.

Law enforcement monitoring

The Center has developed a program for monitoring the execution of laws. The program allows one both to reveal violations of the law and identify legal obstructions. The results of monitoring are used to improve ECOM law-making and remedial functions.

Currently, the Center is monitoring two St. Petersburg acts – the Law on the Protection of Green Plantations and the Law on the Procedure for the Participation of the Public and Public Organizations in Discussing and Making Decisions on Town-Planning in St. Petersburg.

Public opinion polls

The Center is engaged in conducting public opinion polls jointly with research institutions. This work is done within the framework of information campaigns and projects dealing with public involvement in decision making. Our recent research concerned the following issues:

- The attitude of the population to illegal forest use;

- The view of the inhabitants of Priluzskii District, the Republic of Komi, on public hearings;
- The public opinion about issues related to public hearings on town-planning projects in St. Petersburg.

Educational programs and trainings

ECOM members have devised educational courses in the theory and practice of public participation, sustainable development, and environmental expert review that are given in the leading higher educational institutions of St. Petersburg, among them St. Petersburg State University, Northwestern Government Service Academy, and others. The ECOM Center has held more than 35 information and training seminars on public participation in St. Petersburg and other Russian cities. The main topics covered were:

- What is public participation?
- Environmental Impact Assessment (OVOS) and public participation in decision making.
- Ways for expanding public participations in forest management.
- Ways for expanding public participations in town-planning activity.
- Methodologies for estimating the level of public participation in projects and programs.
- Preparing the rules for public hearings, public councils, and other arrangements with public involvement.
- How to organize and hold public hearings.
- Russian laws on public participation in environmental decision making.

An open ecological library has been set up in the Center. The library affords a unique selection of state-of-the-art educational literature and reference materials.

Consulting

ECOM members take part in municipal and regional projects as independent experts and consultants on issues pertaining to the organization of public participation. Deputies to government bodies and local authorities as well as representatives of business companies and industrial facilities approach ECOM experts for advice. Our experts have prepared recommendations on public participation issues to the Human Rights Commissioner in St. Petersburg.

ECOM geography

Jointly with our partners, we implement projects and educational programs in the area of public participation in St. Petersburg, the oblasts of Leningrad, Irkutsk, Murmansk, Pskov, and Novgorod, and the Republic of Komi.

The ECOM Center partners with leading Russian and international environmental organizations and is a member of the European Eco-Forum and the Northern Alliance for Sustainability (ANPED).

Welcome to our web sites:
 ECOM Center for Expert Advice:
www.ecom-info.spb.ru and
 St. Petersburg Society for Naturalists:
<http://www.bio.pu.ru/loe/>

A.S. Karpov

Director, ECOM Center for Expert Advice
 Assistant Professor, Nevskii Institute of Language and Culture

AT THE VORONEZH CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

On February 14, 2005, the Voronezh Center for Environmental Policy regional public organization inaugurated the Public Environmental Mail – a system of handling written requests and appeals of people via a network of green mail boxes. Each individual not indifferent to problems related to adverse environmental impacts may leave an appeal in boxes signed Public Environmental Mail. The boxes are installed in the building of the General Post Office (Federal Mail Administration of Voronezh Oblast – division of the Russian Mail federal state unitary enterprise), in Nikitin Oblast library, and Kirov Palace of Culture.

About 200 appeals have arrived so far from the inhabitants of Voronezh concerned about issues of environmental protection and nature use. Following preliminary consideration of citizens' appeals by members of the Voronezh Center for Environmental Policy public regional organization, they are forwarded to appropriate agencies competent to address a given question: the territorial administrations of Rospotrebnadzor (Federal Supervisory Service for Protection of Consumers' Rights and People's Wellbeing), Rosprirodnadzor (Federal Supervisory Service for Nature Management), Rostekhnadzor (Federal Service for Environmental, Technological, and Nuclear Control), the Environmental Inspectorate of the Voronezh Oblast Administration, and the Environmental Department of the Voronezh Administration.

Local inhabitants are most frequently concerned about the chopping down of trees and bushes, the combustion of garbage on bin grounds, the quality of drinking water and the condition of surface water bodies, the availability of unauthorized dumps, the constriction of new projects, and other issues. The response is sent to the Applicant, if the address is available. The function of the public environmental mail enjoys popularity among the Voronezh population. A summary of responses to citizens' recourses is on a regular basis given via the media – the Boomerang newspaper.

In March 2005, the center initiated and held jointly with the Public Chamber of Voronezh Oblast a press conference entitled Spring – the Awakening of Nature. The press conference was dedicated to Water and Meteorology World Days. It was attended by officials from the Voronezh Oblast Rostekhnadzor Administration; the Voronezh Oblast Rosprirodnadzor Administration; the territorial Rospotrebnadzor Administration for Voronezh Oblast; the Forestry Agency for Voronezh Oblast; the Environmental Inspectorate of the Voronezh Oblast Administration; the Voronezh Center for Sanitary and Epidemiological Supervision state enterprise, the Voronezh Oblast Department for Water Resources, Don Basin Water Administration, Federal Agency for Water Resources; and representatives of Voronezh businesses and public organizations. The press conference offered a good opportunity for exchanging information on the state of the environment and the use of natural resources as well as for working out available ways of public participation in environmental activity.

A Water Lesson was conducted by members of the Voronezh Center for Environmental Policy at Voronezh schools from March 21 to 31, 2005. In the course of business demonstration games using special in-

The top priority of a Voronezh regional public organization Center for Environmental Policy is working with the population.

formation sheets, schoolchildren learned to treat water – a major source of human vital activity – with care. One of such Water Lessons was shown on television by the TNT-Gubernia channel.

In April 2005, the Center, jointly with the Department of Education of the administration of a Voronezh municipal district, announced a city competition of creative works From the Young People of Voronezh to the Environment! More than seventy schoolchildren and nineteen teachers took part in the competition. Creative works on environmental subjects – fairy tales, stories, projects, and drawings – were evaluated by a competition commission organized at the Center. Winners were awarded diplomas and presents.

During the summer season, the Voronezh Center for Environmental Policy conducts business environmental games Let Us Make Friends with Nature in children's health-improving camps. The games are primarily aimed to expand children's knowledge about nature, build ecological culture, and develop their memory and mentality. On June 9, 2005, competitions and quizzes on environmental subjects were organized for children of 11 and 12 years at the Almaz health-improving camp. All participants were rewarded with presents.

The Voronezh Center for Environmental Policy took part in the implementation of the "Live Long, Spring!" project, which was launched by the Voronezh Oblast Public Chamber and financed by the Russian Regional Environmental Center. Within the framework of this project, five springs located in the territory of the city of Voronezh were improved. Information boards "Attention! This Living Spring Is for You!" were made. An information booklet entitled The Living Springs of Voronezh for You. Appeals regarding the development of a target environmental program "Live Long, Spring!" were prepared for the Voronezh Oblast Duma, the Voronezh Oblast Department for Ecology and Natural Resources, and the Rospotrebnadzor for Voronezh Oblast. This would help the inhabitants of settlements where there is no centralized system of drinking water supply.

On October 25, 2005, members of the Voronezh Center took part in a field press conference on issues related to the conservation of springs in the city of Voronezh. The conference discussed the outcome and sizing up of the "Live Long, Spring!" project. It is safe to say that after this action the purity and improvement of springs have become of public concern.

On March 22, 2006, a public action "Respect for Water" was conducted with support of the Voronezh Oblast Public Chamber on the premises of Nikitin Oblast Scientific library. The event was dedicated to World Water Day and aimed at popularizing a reasonable, thrifty use of one of the most important natural resources – water. Schoolchildren and teachers from Voronezh secondary schools took an active part in this arrangement. Students from High School 40 gave

a theatrical performance, the principal idea of which was a need to take care of nature. Specialists from the Rostekhnadzor, Rosprirodnadzor, and Rospotrebnadzor; the Voronezh Oblast Department for Water Resources; and the Voronezh Water Canal municipal unitary enterprise addressed the audience. The issues discussed concerned the quality of drinking water supplied to the houses and the necessity of using it in a rational manner and other currently important problems of water resources, for example, the condition of small rivers in Voronezh Oblast.

On April 21, 2006, the Center for Environmental Policy arranged planting of trees and bushes in the courts of some schools in Voronezh to provide more greenery around schools and create green corners.

V.M. Labzukova

Voronezh Center for Environmental Policy

THE PRIVOLZHISK CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENT HEALTH

At the end of 2004, a Privolzhsk Center for Environment Health was established in Nizhni Novgorod as an autonomous noncommercial organization specialized in providing environmental, legal, and information-analysis services for the conservation of the natural environment and ecologization of nature-use activities.

The Center united, on a voluntary basis, experts in various fields, such as ecologists, biologists, toxicologists, phytopathologists, physicists, mathematicians, and others, concerned with the conservation of a healthy environment.

The Center's creative team has abundant experience in carrying out integrated ecological studies of urban and natural environments including environmental certification of urban lakes and small rivers in Nizhni Novgorod, Dzerzhinsk, and Sarov; environment quality assessment based on bioindicators' developmental stability in recreational areas of major industrial centers; and conducting biomonitoring in the affected zone of the Surovatikha ballistic rocket elimination facility and other environmentally hazardous facilities. This work is presently going on.

Traditionally, the Center places high emphasis on environmental awareness-building and information-analysis work. In 2005, in partnership with Lobachevsky State University, Nizhni Novgorod, the Center took part in the organization and holding of the 8th All-Russian Population Seminar, the All-Russian Competition of Student's Papers on Ecology and Sustainable Nature Use, the annual Nizhni-Novgorod schoolchildren's ecological Olympiad, the preparation and edition of Volume 6 of the Environmental Monitoring manual, and a number of other arrangements.

Besides, in 2005, with financial support of the international environmental foundation Blacksmith Institute and jointly with the Agricultural Administration of Bogorodsk District, Nizhni Novgorod Oblast, the Center organized elimination of the pesticide and insecticide waste tip on the outskirts of Nizhni Novgorod.

The Center is open for partnership and establishment of business and friendly relations with experts and organizations concerned about protection of the health of our habitat.

The contacts of the Privolzhsk Center for Environment Health are: Office 409, 23 Gagarin Pr., Bldg. 5, Nizhni Novgorod 603950, Russian Federation; phone: (8312) 65-62-43; fax: (8312) 65-22-08; e-mail: ecology@bio.unn.ru, Web site: <http://healthofenvironment-volga.ru>

**The Center united, on a voluntary basis, experts
in various fields, such as ecologists, biologists,
toxicologists, phytopathologists, physicists,
mathematicians, and others, concerned with the
conservation of a healthy environment.**

D.B. Gelashvili

Director, Privolzhsk Center for Environment Health

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF CHUVASHIA

Although economic activity has affected virtually every canton in the Republic of Chuvashia, nature here is rich in biological resources. Thanks to the diversity and beauty of nature, the originality of ethnic and cultural traditions of the population, and opportunities to provide environmentally clean foodstuffs, experts from the European Commission marked the recreational potential of Chuvashia very high with a focus on environmental and rural tourism. A republican target program has been adopted to promote tourism in 2005-2010.

Typical Chuvash environmental problems are distributed throughout the territory of the republic irregularly. The most stressful situation is in the north, in the cities of Cheboksary and Novocheboksarsk, where the overwhelming majority of republican industrial facilities and half of its population (predominantly, the youngest part) are concentrated. Primary agricultural areas show much promise for mass production of clean products. The farm of A.P. Aidak has accumulated nationally known experience in environmental landscape-consistent farming. However, with lacking proper legal regulation and a system of incentives at the republican level, the agriculture is essentially depletive in nature with stresses exceeding the threshold of environmental safety.

The socioeconomic situation in this historically labor-redundant, subsidized republic remains rather is rather complicated, because the reorganization of the former Soviet economic structure without adequate investment has led to significant degradation in both industrial and agricultural outputs. In the conditions of limited natural resources, the republican leadership views intellectual capitalization and activity of citizens as the basis for sustainable socioeconomic development.

As a result of perpetual reorganizations of environmental agencies, the system of oversight over nature user activities and their effects on the environment has become practically disorganized for indefinite time. The system of environmental funds that earlier accumulated environmental charges – nearly the only real source of finance of environmental arrangements in the territories – has been destroyed. The current situation is characterized by emergence of certain points of economic growth on the background of decline in the efficiency of state environmental policy and public activity. It should be noted that these points of economic growth (chemical industry and mechanical engineering) are more oriented to the exploitation of the most accessible resources – cheap labor and practically free assimilation potential of the environment (that is, a possibility of a relatively free uncontrolled disposal of harmful waste).

Taking into consideration the features of public mind development, it would be improper for public organizations to substitute control and inspection authorities or confine themselves to critical, didactic remarks aimed at government bodies, although such approach should not be in principle excluded for some particular cases when society may face crying violations of environmental law. We think it essential to establish a dialog and constructive partnership among government environmen-

The Center for Chuvash Environmental Policy has implemented several projects to promote priorities of environmental policy at the regional level within the framework of the Agreement on Joint Activity in Building Regional Environmental Policy that was signed in 2003 by the Center for Russian Environmental Policy, the Chuvash Ministry for Nature Management, and the Cheboksary Environmental Committee.

tal bodies, NGOs, and economic entities. It should be emphasized that this dialog should be based on a fundamental groundwork rather than on the attempts of the public to be heard by the deaf.

In the mid 1990s, an informal union of environmental experts consisting of members of environmental organizations and community workers was built up in the Republic of Chuvashia. In the late 1990s, this ecological association established stable contacts with the Center for Russian Environmental Policy (CREP). Joint discussing in the course of seminars projects developed by leading Russian experts, such as the priorities of Russian environmental policy, the assessment of the health of the environment, the principles of building an ecological culture, the economic mechanisms of environmental policy, and others, brought together the positions of representatives of scientific, governmental, and public environmental organizations and furthered their mutual understanding and professional growth.

About two years ago, thanks to CREP's scientific, methodological, and organizational support, the association of republican environmentalists was formalized as the Center for Chuvash Environmental Policy (CCEP). This allowed the Chuvash public to raise the interaction with the republican environmental authorities at a new, considerably more effective level.

The Center for Chuvash Environmental Policy has implemented several projects to promote priorities of environmental policy at the regional level within the framework of the Agreement on Joint Activity in Building Regional Environmental Policy that was signed in 2003 by the Center for Russian Environmental Policy, the Chuvash Ministry for Nature Management, and the Cheboksary Environmental Committee.

In Cheboksary, an additional basic vocational training program named Building Principles of Ecological Culture has been implemented. It covered 30 specialists (teachers, journalists, representatives of public organizations, librarians) from cities, towns, and districts of the Republic of Chuvashia, Nizhni Novgorod Oblast, and the Republics of Mordovia and Marii El. For the first time, social and psychological study was held to find out the attitude of various population groups to environmental problems and priorities of environmental policy in the republic. The established features of environmental awareness allow one to apply methods of psychological and pedagogical correction when developing educational and awareness-building programs and follow up activities in this area. Unfortunately, the study revealed inadequacy of ecological world outlook and environmental awareness not only among the population in general but among experts involved in educational institutions and culture centers as well. Investigation

of the type of dominant attitude regarding nature among representatives of the environmental structures of enterprises and municipal agencies showed that nature as an object of protection turned out to be last. Obviously, for practical meeting the challenge of raising the standard of people's ecological culture it is primarily necessary to train qualified specialists in environmental awareness-building and environmental education as well as appropriate methodological support. To this end, the Center for Chuvash Environmental Policy in association with the Institute of Education of the Chuvash Ministry of Education practices informational and training seminars for specialists of municipal educational institutions and culture centers as well as for lecturers and students from higher and secondary educational institutions. To satisfy the need in methodological guides, the Center for Chuvash Environmental Policy jointly with the National Chuvash Library has launched a project entitled Electronic Library to present available information on CDs. Via a network of model libraries this information becomes accessible to experts and interested citizens in 100 spots of the Chuvash Republic. To provide information support to specialists from other territories, materials will be placed in a library of the Center Web site. Trained specialists form the methodological core of the Center for Chuvash Environmental Policy. The Center for Chuvash Environmental Policy, when implementing its projects and engaging its colleagues, provides advice and thus helps raise the general level of effectiveness of this activity. The constraining factor in the promotion of systematic activity on building ecological culture is lack of legal regulation and competition support at the republican and municipal levels.

In partnership with republican and municipal authorities, the Center for Chuvash Environmental Policy supported by the Center for Russian Environmental Policy (O.E. Medvedeva, A.G. Kornilov) is conducting work on methodological guidance in building an economic mechanism for regional environmental policy. This work primarily concerns economic assessment of damages and losses inflicted to individual natural components. In a number of municipalities, regulatory acts, such as the Rules for Assessment and Reimbursement of Damages to Green Plantations and the Procedure for Handling Construction Waste in the Territory of Municipal Entities, have been introduced. In addition, methodological recommendations on land littering damage assessment and indemnity have been developed and now are applied. Practice of implementation in the Chuvash Republic of methods for assessment and reparation of damages to various natural components (just like the implementation of similar methods in some other regions, especially, in Moscow) shows that despite certain limitation

of regional competence in the area of environmental regulation, if the environmental state of natural components is regarded as an economic component of the environmental property complex at the disposal of federal constituents and municipal entities, it is possible for the regions to essentially regulate environmental issues in an indirect way. Yet, it should be emphasized that the redistribution of authority not to the good of regions, which has been effected by federal legislation, considerably restrains government bodies in their territorial activities related to the promotion of efficient, cheaper economic mechanisms in the sphere of nature management and environmental protection.

To implement an integrated approach when developing an effective environmental policy for sustainable development, it is extremely important to estimate the natural capital and introduce a system of environmental and economic indicators in the programs of socioeconomic development of both the republic and municipalities. With this objective in view, the Center for Russian Environmental Policy and the Center for Chuvash Environmental Policy charged by the Chuvash Ministry for Natural Resources and Environment have started work on developing a system of environmental and economic indicators of sustainable development for the Chuvash Republic. The work is scheduled to be finished at the end of 2007. The outcome will be identification and differentiation of environmental and economic indicators that may be included in the system of estimated economic figures at the republican and municipal levels.

A large number of figures and consultations with experts and representatives of nongovernmental organizations and business groups held both in the republic and outside have shown that problems of sustainable development, promotion of the health of the environment, and raising of the value of natural resources have not yet been properly established in the substance of education or activities of regional bodies and NGOs.

To introduce to the priorities of regional environmental policy for sustainable development and to share the experience of territories in this area, the Center for Chuvash Environmental Policy, with support and participation of the Center for Russian Environmental Policy, the Chuvash State Council, and the Chuvash Ministry for Nature Management, has held an interregional conference Building an Environmental Policy for Sustainable Development of the Region: Problems and Prospects. At the conference, which was held in Cheboksary, presentations were given by leading Russian scientists and experts in the field of environmental economics, environmental law, assessment of the health of the environment and environmental risks, building an ecological

culture, representatives of pilot regions, responsible representatives of organs of power of the Povolzhsk region, and representatives of science and the public from 16 Russian constituents.

Among positive outcomes of this meeting, we would emphasize great interest to the function of centers for environmental policy shown by participants from many other Russian regions as well as the appreciation of this experience by local executive bodies.

In the existing conditions, to address key tasks along basic lines of regional environmental policy and involve the public in decision-making, the Center for Chuvash Environmental Policy projects to promote information exchange and joint projects with local universities, NGOs, the mass media, and authorities within the framework of proposals on cooperation developed.

O.T. Alekseeva

Center for Chuvash Environmental Policy

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN TOWN-PLANNING ACTIVITY

Russian legal framework for public participation

International legal rules and Russian legislation fail to include detailed regulation on public participation in town-planning activity. Some related provisions of international legal rules and Russian legislation are declarative in nature but still can be used as fundamental principles that determine public participation in town-planning activity.

The laws of Russian constituents and, in a greater degree, a series of municipal entities in Russian constituents establish both general procedures for public participation in town-planning activity and particular forms of such participation (public awareness, public hearings, participation in decision-making, and so on). Besides, there are provisions for protection of human rights when exercising town-planning activity (settlement of disputes, bringing to account, and reparation of damages).

Our analysis of administrative and legal acts regulating public participation in town-planning activity and experience in implementing these instruments has shown that the legally bound provision about public participation in actual practice turns out to be formal and permissive.

On the other hand, a wide range of regulatory documents that embody citizens' rights may serve a legal framework for public participation in making important decisions regarding town-planning activities.

An essential regulatory source for public participation is Article 9 of the Russian Constitution. The provision for the use of land and other natural resources as the basis for life and activities of peoples living in respective territories is the justification of the population's legal interest in addressing diverse issues of land use nature management. The specific feature of the legal regulation of public involvement is its dispersion among several branches of legislation. Basically, the principles of public participation are laid down in environmental law. In addition, certain procedures of public participation are embodied in a number of regulatory acts pertaining to town planning, local self-government, and land relations.

The general principles of public participation declared in the federal laws are as follows:

- Transparency and taking account of the public opinion;
- Public participation in important decision making in earliest possible phases to make sure that materials reflecting the public opinion are duly considered and taken into account and proposed recommendations and remarks are taken care of;
- Reliability and completeness of information presented to the public;
- Openness and objectivity of the process of public participation;
- Presumption of potential environmental danger of any projected economic or other activity;

Our analysis of administrative and legal acts regulating public participation in town-planning activity and experience in implementing these instruments has shown that the legally bound provision about public participation in actual practice turns out to be formal and permissive.

- Priority of environmental aspects over social, economic, and other aspects of economic or other activity;
- Liability of stakeholders for non-performance or improper performance of the public participation procedure.

The laws on local self-government provide for the following forms of public participation:

- Citizens' law-making initiative,
- Territorial public self-government,
- Public hearings,
- Meetings of citizens,
- Conferences of citizens (meeting of delegates),
- Public opinion poll,
- Resort of citizens to local government authorities,
- Other forms of participation in exercising local administration not contravening the Russian Constitution.

Statutory acts that contain provisions regarding the procedure for taking account of the public opinion fail to establish criteria of the evaluation of public opinion polls (including the percent of population that should be polled, the percent of the polled opinion that should be considered effective, and so on). However, on June 10, 1999, the Russian Gosstro (State Committee for Construction and Architecture) considered and approved the Methodological Recommendations for the Development of a Procedure for Public Participation in Discussing and Making Decisions on Issues Related to the Building up and Use of the Territories of Cities and Other Populated Areas (Guidance Documents in Construction 15-1.99, Protocol No 01-HC-15/7), which describe the mechanism for taking account of the public opinion in town-planning practices. The purpose of the Methodological Recommendations was to provide local government authorities with guidelines for developing and implementing the Procedure for Public Participation in Discussing and Making Decisions on Issues Related to the Building up and Use of the Territories of Cities and Other Populated Areas.

The new version of the Russian Town-Planning Code No 190-FZ of December 29, 2004 (amended on July 22, 2005) introduced considerable amendments in the regulatory town-planning procedure and at last defined the role and position of public discussion in sufficient detail. In the new Town-Planning Code, this procedure is named "public hearings" and is exercised to comply with human rights to favorable living conditions and the rights and legitimate interests of land and capital construction project owners.

In conformity with Article 28.2 of the Russian Town-Planning Code and Article 28 of the Federal

Law on the General Principles of the Organization of Local Self-Government in the Russian Federation, the procedure for the organization and conduction of public hearings is laid down in the municipal charter and (or) the regulatory acts of a representative body of the municipal entity.

Notions and definitions

The amendments in the Town-Planning Code of July 22, 2005 introduced such new notion as "public hearings" in this instrument. Unfortunately, Article 1 "Basic Notions..." does not define this newly introduced notion. Other RF legislative documents fail to contain a definition of this notion either.

It should be noted that the legislative rules of environmental law, public participation, or public discussion were borrowed from international laws and the laws of advanced countries, for the most part, the United States and the Great Britain. In recent years, in connection with Russia's intention to join the World Trade Organization, intensive work has been underway since 2002 on adapting the Russian legislation to the standards of the European Union. The European Union is rendering state assistance to the Russian Federation in unifying the Russian laws to comply with those of the European Union. This effort involves translation of a number of directives and legislative documents of the European Union into Russian. Not infrequently translators may not be well versed in one area or another and misinterpret certain notions.

It was probably the case with the adaptation of RF Town-Planning Code provisions to the EU directives in respect of issues related to the implementation and organization of public participation. Major international documents that postulate and regulate public participation procedures (World Charter for Nature, 1982; Council of Europe Resolution No 171, 1986; Aarhus Convention, 1998), often use, along with the term "public participation", a concept named "public hearing", which when translated directly sounds as "open hearing of a case" or "public hearing of a case" but actually means a lengthy procedure consisting of at least three units:

1. Public information.
2. Consultation (discussion with the public).
3. Taking the public opinion into consideration.

Both public information and consultation may be exercised using various approaches. Public hearing is one of the approaches at the consultation stage. Other methods also may be used at this stage, for example, polls, questioning, round tables, discussions, meetings with focus groups, and so on. The hearing proper, such as an assembly of residents, or stakeholders, or groups concerned at one place at one time is held only if the issue in question affects the interests of the majority

of people. Taking the public opinion into consideration means making a decision on amending (non-amending) the draft document or projected activity under consideration. In so doing, a report must be prepared without fail about which opinion has been taken into account and which not indicating why.

Also, the Town-Planning Code and the Law on the General Principles of the Organization of Local Self-Government in the Russian Federation lay down that the public hearing procedure may take from one to three months (clearly, the reference is not to a meeting at one place at one time) and it is supposed that public information, exhibitions, collecting proposals and comments, a meeting of residents, and the account of comments received should be arranged within this timeframe.

The Federal Law on the General Principles of the Organization of Local Self-Government in the Russian Federation No 131-FZ of October 6, 2003 (as amended on July 21, 2005), Article 28 Public Hearings, provides in i. 4 a list of stages and arrangements to be included in the procedure for the organization and conducting of public hearings: "The procedure for the organization and conducting of public hearings ... must include an advance warning of the population of a municipal entity about the time and place of holding public hearings, an advance familiarization with a draft municipal legal act, other measures to ensure the participation of municipal entity residents in the public hearing, and the publication (divulcation) of public hearing outcomes.

It may be concluded from the above that the Town-Planning Code and the Law on the General Principles of the Organization of Local Self-Government in the Russian Federation lay down all necessary principles of public participation proclaimed in major international documents.

Consequently, a more correct translation into Russian of the concept discussed here would be not "public hearing" but rather "public discussion" as a procedure incorporating several stages, whereas a public hearing is, in fact, one arrangement of this procedure and it is conducted when the interests of the majority of population or representatives of stakeholders are affected.

However, since the Town-Planning Code uses the notion "public hearings," to avoid conflicts with the federal legislation when developing municipal statutory documents that regulate this process, one should use the public hearing concept too. In so doing, it is recommended that this notion be given an appropriate definition as a procedure.

Let us demonstrate this by way of example. A public hearing is a procedure (a series of interrelated arrangements) for identifying the opinion of interested public about a certain issue in order to take it into consideration in decision making.

At the same time, to define a hearing as a meeting of residents or interested stakeholders (groups of people) at one place at certain time, it is proposed to use such notion as a "meeting of residents (interested people)" that is also encountered in the Town-Planning Code (Article 28.5).

Fundamental rules for the organization of public hearings (public participation)

Based on our analysis of the international and Russian laws on the regulation and organization of public hearings (public participation), we may emphasize 5 fundamental rules of this procedure as follows:

1. Sufficient amount of adequate information should be presented in a reasonable form easily understood by laypersons (however, free of unnecessary simplification or primitivism).
2. Stakeholders should have enough time to get familiarized with the information, discuss and analyze it, and make conclusions.
3. Stakeholders should have enough time to present their point of view.
4. It is necessary to respond to the questions/problems posed or comments made by stakeholders (the feedback principle).
5. When choosing the place for meetings and scheduling the arrangements, it is necessary to ensure the best attendance and free information exchange among all stakeholders.

These rules have been used for developing a municipal regulatory document – the Procedure for the Organization and Conducting of Public Hearings When Exercising Town-Planning Activities in the Territory of a Novokuznetsk Urban District. The draft document was developed by a Kemerovo regional public organization Environmental Information Agency (In-EcA), Novokuznetsk, at the instance of the Central Municipal Architecture and Town-Planning Administrative Board (GlavUAiG), City Administration, in compliance with Revision of the Russian Town-Planning Code No 190-FZ of April 12 (amended July 22, 2005 and December 31, 2005).

E.V. Perfilieva

InEcA Environmental Information Agency, Novokuznetsk

REGULATIONS FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS IN TOWN-PLANNING ACTIVITIES

On December 27, 2005, right on the New Year eve, an important event took place in the social life of Novokuznetsk. The Soviet of People's Deputies adopted The Regulations on the Procedure for the Organization and Conducting of Public Hearings When Exercising Town-Planning Activities in the Territory of a Novokuznetsk Urban District. Despite the fact that this decision has not been widely covered in the city media, it may still be considered a kind of milestone in the relationships among the municipal administration, developers, and local population.

The draft document was developed by a Kemerovo regional public organization Environmental Information Agency (InEcA), Novokuznetsk, at the instance of the Central Municipal Architecture and Town-Planning Administrative Board (GlavUAiG), City Administration, in compliance with Revision of the Russian Town-Planning Code No 190-FZ of April 12 (amended July 22, 2005 and December 31, 2005). InEcA experts developed this document at the expense of InEcA own means without support from the city budget.

The need in the development and adoption of such document has been more than once discussed in Novokuznetsk over the last 2–3 years by government structures, public organizations, and just people concerned. The rights of citizens to participation in discussing town-planning issues are embodied in the federal legislation (the Russian Constitution, the Federal Law on Environmental Protection, and other instruments) in a declarative manner. In actual practice, however, no clearly regulated procedure for public participation has been developed for local or regional levels. The unavailability of such document hinders town-planning activities and leads to conflicting situations and, quite often, to businessmen's financial losses.

The initial version of the Regulation on Public Participation in Town-Planning Activity was developed by InEcA in 2003–2004 within the framework of two grant projects: a Russian–British project entitled The Expansion of the Legal and Methodological Framework of Public Participation and Protection of Citizens' Environmental Rights when Implementing a Town-Planning Policy at the Municipal Level and a project named The Student Ecological Parliament (SEP). The effort was assisted by the city administration and financially supported by the TACIS program of the European Commission (details can be found at the InEcA site <http://www.ineca.ru/?dr=projects&pg=arhiv>). However the document was not adopted at that time, because it was expected that the Town-Planning Code would be amended.

Indeed, the new version of the Russian Town-Planning Code No 190-FZ of December 29, 2004 (amended on July 22, 2005) essentially amended the procedure for exercising town-planning activities and, at last, defined the role and position of public discussions. In the new Town-Planning Code this procedure is named "public hearings" and is conducted to comply with human rights to favorable living conditions as well as the rights and legitimate interests of ground landlords and capital construction project owners.

Apparently, the procedures for the organization and implementation of public hearings when developing projects often extend the decision-making process and perhaps make the projects themselves more expensive. On the other hand, public participation organized at early decision-making stages allows one to slacken social tension and improve the population's credibility to the government, and, in addition, public discussions often provide town-planning initiators with interesting suggestions on improving their project solutions.

While working at grant projects, InEcA experts accumulated abundant experience, which, no doubt, came in handy to them when they were developing the new Regulations.

In the autumn of 2005, the new version of the Regulations was submitted to the GlavUAIg, city district administrations, the Administration for Land Resources and Land Management, and the Legal Department of the City Administration for consideration. Then, the GlavUAIg submitted the adjusted draft document to the Municipal Soviet of People's Deputies for approval.

One should not think that with the adoption of this document by the Soviet of People's Deputies, city administration officers or construction initiators would in actual practice be obliged to immediately respond to every complaint of an indignant citizen and conduct a public referendum on any occasion as was announced by one of the city television channels.

The adopted Regulations on the Procedure for the Organization and Conducting of Public Hearings When Exercising Town-Planning Activities in the Territory of a Novokuznetsk Urban District clearly prescribe a procedure for public hearings. The Regulations define in what cases and on what issues it is necessary to conduct public hearings, specify the time constraints of public hearings, and delineate the responsibility and obligations of the city administration, activity initiators, and public hearings organizers. Also, the Regulations prescribe a minimum set of necessary arrangements for conducting public hearings on a particular type of question discussed ranging from a draft general town planning scheme to capital project reconstruction. The implementation of this procedure will allow town-planning initiators, developers, and entrepreneurs to take into account the interests of local inhabitants and owners and reduce the risk of conflicting situations, delays, and costs when implementing one or another project.

Further to the Regulations, Methodological Recommendations are in progress to provide details regarding how it is necessary to organize and conduct arrangements within the framework of public hearings, model forms of a planned schedule, an announcement, minutes of a meeting with local residents, a report on accounting of the public opinion, and so on.

Apparently, the procedures for the organization and implementation of public hearings when developing projects often extend the decision-making process and perhaps make the projects themselves more expensive. On the other hand, public participation organized at early decision-making stages allows one to slacken social tension and improve the population's credibility to the government, and, in

addition, public discussions often provide town-planning initiators with interesting suggestions on improving their project solutions.

At the same time, people themselves should not just have a right but have a well-organized opportunity to legitimately assert their viewpoint and defend their values. The participation of city residents in public discussion procedures will allow them to get really involved in city renewal and development projects.

In short, the Regulations for public participation much spoken of in Novokuznetsk recently have at last been adopted. We'll see how it will work in practice.

**N.V. Sudakova,
E.V. Perfilieva, and
E.F. Telgerekov**

InEcA Environmental Information Agency, Novokuznetsk

THE ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION AGENCY IS 10 YEARS OLD

Today, the Environmental Information Agency (InEcA), which was established in 1995, is probably one of the best known professional public environmental organizations in Kuznetsk Coal Basin (Kuzbass). Ten years... On the one hand, it is a wonderful anniversary and festival, and, on the other hand, it is a good occasion for looking back to assess the way we have come. It has been a really long way from the initial idea to the present day – from a public organization disseminating environmental information to a professional consulting agency. Just as the country and society have been dynamically developing, our organization has been varying. At the same time, our ideas about what we can and must do have been developing too. Based on these ideas, we have been planning and implementing our most diversified projects. There have been people coming to us, leaving us, and those who have stayed with us... Today, the InEcA team unites like-minded experts who are capable of doing their job at a high professional level.

Ten years... For a public organization this means a whole epoch. We have been growing and developing in the conditions of a "new, rejuvenated Russia." In spite of various collisions we have had to confront, we have survived, continued to develop, and have had accomplishments to be proud of. Our early projects – the InEcA Eco-Bulletin and the environmental library – have been still existing and improving. The resource center for public initiative support has been converted to the Public Consulting Department and has also continued its operation. For these decade, we have managed to implement a host of wonderful grant projects both with Russian and foreign partners, which has undoubtedly played a great part in the professional development of the members of our organization. We have learned to attract and professionally manage foreign investments and help other organizations to master this rather difficult job.

Seeking financial stability in the situation when no government support was available made the public organization look for an acceptable range of commercial services that would enable us not just to earn money but also to expand the organization and improve the qualification of its members. As a result, the InEcA Center for Environmental Projects was set up. It has been effectively working with industrial enterprises and rendering them paid services in the field of environmental consulting.

This project has proved to be very successful and has been legalized as a separate legal entity – InEcA Consulting. Today, among InEcA clients are both municipal enterprises and large Russian industrial companies. The staff's customary kindness, responsibility, and continuous upgrading of skills and raising of the quality of services provided have made it possible to form a group of regular customers and attract new ones. InEcA has begun to work successfully with plant facilities not only in Kemerovo Oblast but in other regions as well – all in all, more than 60 businesses. Our major customers include such largest industrial facilities as RUSAL, EurasHolding, Yuzhkuzbassugol, Yuzhnyi Kuzbass Coal Company, Euro-Asian Energy Company, and others. At the same time, small businesses engaged in building, food, motor and railway transport, and filling stations have remained our regular clients too. We value their trust in us and try to carry out all orders in a high-grade, professional manner.

InEcA's experience covers various areas of regional environmental policy including

- Indicators of sustainable development;
- Legislation and economic regulation in the field of environmental protection;
- Environmental Impact Assessment (OVOS) and environmental audit;
- Implementation of environmental management systems at industrial enterprises;
- Assessment of risks to human health from existing or projected economic activities;

- Environmental and economic assessment of investment project efficiency;
- Regulation of emissions, discharges, and wastes for industrial facilities;
- Providing environmental information services;
- Public participation in environmentally significant decision-making.

For ten years of operation, InEcA has implemented more than 100 environmental and social projects of local, regional, and interregional significance. Our organization took part in the EcoMir'2005 National Ecological Competition and became a prize winner in Environmental Policy for the successful implementation of the Russian British project "Development of the Concept for Kemerovo Oblast Environmental Policy. Authority, Business, and Public Partnership." When implementing this project, InEcA was for two years fruitfully cooperating with a major British environmental consulting company Environmental Resources Management Ltd (ERM, London). The outcome of the project was Russia's first Concept for Environmental Policy developed at the regional level and approved as a regulatory instrument. The distinctive feature of the project was that for the first time in Kemerovo Oblast, a large number of both experts and interested public was engaged in the development and discussion of a strategic document.

One of InEcA's recent projects has been the Development of Sustainability Indicators for Kemerovo Oblast. This project was implemented with support of the Center for Russian Environmental Policy and participation of representatives of Kemerovo Oblast Administration departments, territorial offices of government services in the field of environmental protection and public health, oblast higher educational institutions, and public organizations. The development of sustainability indicators became a logical extension of the efforts resulted from the development of the Concept for Kemerovo Oblast Environmental Policy.

Our many years' activity in the public sector has given us valuable experience in constructive interaction with administrative environmental structures at the municipal, regional, and federal levels. While working at joint projects, we learned to establish mutually beneficial partnerships with authorities, businesses, and public organizations.

One of InEcA's priorities is improving the methodology for environmental expert review. InEcA members have been trained within the framework of grant programs in such areas as Strategic Environmental Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment (OVOS), environmental expert review, and environmental management and audit. This knowledge is now intensively used and enriched in the Agency's practical activities.

The experience we gained from the development of the Concept for Kemerovo Oblast Environmental Policy and sustainability indicators helps us in making strategic environmental assessments and estimating the environmental and economic efficiency of investment projects, the economic effect from the implementation of environmental arrangements, and environmental damage. InEcA's works on assessing the environmental and economic efficiency of investment projects have been used by various educational organizations for the preparation of study guides on nature management economics.

InEcA's experience in environmental expert review and the organization of public discussion of decision-making generates interest among representatives of administrative bodies and industrial companies, including from other regions. Our experts were invited by city administrations and industrial facilities to take part in organizing and conducting OVOS's and public discussions in respect of the development of a modernization project for the Krasnoyarsk Aluminum Plant, a project for construction of the second phase of the Sayanogorsk Aluminum Plant in the Republic of Khakassia, and a construction project for the Taisht Aluminum Plant in Irkutsk Oblast.

When arranging and carrying out public discussions (through questionnaire surveys, public inquiries, public hearings, meetings, and round tables) or providing consultations on issues of public participation in the OVOS procedure, we are guided by the expertise assumed within the framework of international projects and study tours and methods used for organizing similar activities in other countries.

Our experts continuously work at upgrading their professional skills and take part in seminars and conferences that are arranged in our oblast, Siberian Federal District, Moscow, St. Petersburg, and other cities.

InEcA's activities are well known not only in Kemerovo Oblast: our projects have been replicated in other Russian regions and our specialists have been on high demand as advisers and experts.

E.F. Telgerekov

Public Relations Officer, InEcA Environmental Information Agency, Novokuznetsk



Bulletin "Towards a Sustainable Russia"
N° 33, 2006

**Letters to the editor
can be mailed to**

CENTER FOR RUSSIAN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY
33, LENINSKY PR., RM 326,
MOSCOW, 119071,
RUSSIA
TEL./FAX:
(095) 952 2423
(095) 952 3007
E-MAIL: ECOPOLICY@ECOPOLICY.RU
WWW.ECOPOLICY.RU

Editorial Board

Chief Editor Vladimir Zakharov
Deputy Chief Editor Sergey Dmitriev
Sergey Bobylev,
Renat Perelet,
Olga Ponizova,
Boris Revich,
Maria Vasilieva,
Alexey Yablokov,
Vitold Yasvin,
Svyatoslav Zabelin

Editor's assistant

Yu.F. Morozova

Design

Petr Maslov

Pre-press

Dmitry Shchepotkin

Published 500 copies

Supported by
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
and The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.
Distributed at no cost.

Individual opinions presented in this bulletin
do not necessarily represent the views of the editors.

Registered by RF State Committee
for Press and Publishing
(Reg. number 01777116)

©Center for Russian Environmental Policy

ISSN 1726-4014