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## EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SHOULD TEACH TO ACT

Now it is necessary to make a «black» list of unfulfilled resolutions. O.A. Razbash undertook this analytical work in 2006. The document shocks by the scale of legal and legislative efforts necessary to restore the lost and to do what was planned, worded, approved, but never done. It is high time to leave the enchantment of words for the material results of actions. Now we have another chance of reviving the public-state form of control and develop self-government. Although the development of these forms needs many decades, now it is important to continue this work.

After all, it is important to pay close attention to the very notion of environmental education, which suggests great concerns, since it has the status of a formally «elective» component in the country's schools. At the 1977 Tbilisi intergovernmental conference on environmental education, the whole world recognized that only school can make environmental education civil. We «humanly» easily forget just what we cannot do.

It is necessary to draw a list of our country's obligations to provide its citizens with rights to live in a favorable environment. It would also be useful to prepare a list of responsible services and deadlines to fulfill the undertaken obligations.

Let us remember that we have no new public movements. When glasnost started, one psychologist said «Look, what's going on: glasnost is there, but there are no voices». Now we have the same situation. Therefore, public environmental organizations jointly with the Public Chamber should support those singular, positive, and rare civil initiatives; strengthen them; and protect them from Moscow. Sometimes, this is possible only from Moscow. It should be a specific social policy, and it will be social, environmental, and cultural: not instead of citizens but together with them.

Nongovernmental organizations should again put this issue directly before the authorities so that their heads act according to environmental principles, which they declare. Environmental principles, criteria, and values in Russia are practically not a political priority in the personal, public, or political life of deputies. Recall that each deputy of the USSR Supreme Council of the last convocation had environmental obligations and fulfilled them to the best of his/her abilities: successes were national.

At the same time, we must not offer impossible objectives to the Public Chamber, for example, to ensure a full-fledged living environment by a new program of financing environmental culture.

There is a suppressed necessity to test our strategic plans, doctrines, etc., by system models, reforms, etc. We sacredly believe in reforms. But first, we should evaluate their feasibility and check their consistency by models. Contemporary science allows us to do it. But there are no orders for models of «sustainable development».

We have the country's obligation to develop a national educational strategy for sustainable development. However, we have not yet publicized the decade of education for sustainable development (2005–2014), announced by the UN. We will be writing new multipage documents. The world is swiftly changing, and «just a document» is not enough. We should teach citizens to act, and for this, education is given to us. Civil actions are also necessary.

**The term sustainable development repeats the fate of the word environmentalism – it palls. We are getting used to just pronouncing it. There are several ways of killing a good undertaking. Number one is to adopt a strategy that has no chance of being implemented. Number two is to demand the consensus from a commission of 30 people in making a decision on an issue. However, we are united in our positive and constructive attitude to problems. Unfortunately, at present, we are planning to do what we discussed and started doing 20 years ago.**

The concept of Limits to Growth, suggested 30 years ago by the group of Prof. D. Meadows, had a colossal influence on our education, culture, and country. Thus, approximately five years ago, the Russian Academy of Sciences published the work *Paradigms of Russia's Development*, in which our researchers were unable to say anything new. We repeated the WORLD3 developmental model in application to our country, and we admitted that there are limits to the capabilities of the «metabolic» biosphere, limits to the growth of current-type civilizations, etc. The question «What is the model of Russian statehood like?» remains without a relevant answer, which is to be obtained as a result of testing not words but dynamic models. If forces and resources are wasted again on the competitive struggle of verbal promises and virtual constructions, nothing will be left for creation. First of all, there will be no time to solve problems.

Finally, we should propose a certain measure of what we want. May be, we already have «environmental culture». Why are you, comrades, «dramatizing» and panicking? Where are the proofs, numbers, and information? Where is the section of statistical data?

Several years ago, at a conference on the environmental problems of highways, a Finn said embarrassedly, «Our country is small; 770 people get killed on our roads annually; and we cannot afford it. Therefore, we have adopted an environmental road security program and introduced organizational and financial measures. These will be specific measures aimed toward the reduction of the number of the killed on roads, which should not exceed 150 people in 5–7 years». Nobody knows whose lives will be saved, but they will be saved. This is a national objective to unite a country. This is a measure of environmental and humanitarian policy.

Underestimating the complexity of objectives is harmful. Let me clarify that all our measures planned to improve the demographic situation look convincingly, but these are just fragments of the whole. They do not give a general view, and they do not comprise a single system. Organizational plans are fragmentary and indefinite by deadlines, while nearly 80% of children in the orphanages of Moscow oblast have both living parents.

Parental behavior has changed, and science has to pool its resources to describe the state of the whole system. But such works run into the disunity of scientific fields. Hopes are pinned on our universities. But here again the aggregate efforts to obtain grants are great, but competition causes disunity among scientists. Very little time is left for research itself. It is necessary to reward complex and interdisciplinary projects within the framework of state orders.

There are no simple ways of solving our problem. A systemic approach is necessary. We should suggest a unifying goal, a measurable concept of personal, family, professional, and regional security in our country. Risk is measurable, and we should teach

citizens to perceive and evaluate it and control events. It is necessary to return to the practice (now rare) of conducting joint ministry boards, because, no secret, colossal misunderstanding exists in Russia at all strata, levels, horizontals, and verticals. Documents mismatch.

Remaining «public», we have been shouldering and bridging these gaps of ministerial misunderstanding for 15 years now. A joint board is needed for agreeing and interfacing the efforts of at least the Russian Ministry of Education and the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources, so that the ministers, their aides, and the whole machinery are oriented toward certain joint achievements and obligations.

In October 2007, in Belgrade, a conference of European ministers of education and environment will be held. Russia has signed important documents on participation in «The Environment for Europe» process, but nobody, including the two Russian ministers, knows whether they will go there.

Russia has not signed the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making, and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters. Obviously, it is necessary to approach it stage-by-stage, since, without environmental information, it is very difficult to persuade people to practical actions.

Despite the fact that it is so difficult to change the educational system, it is important to return to the principles and support of self-education, which was successful in our country. People want to know more, and we should help them make this opportunity a reality.

And finally, we are approaching the need for an «environmental thermometer», which every household will have as an environmental toothbrush. We must make practical environmentalism an everyday component of life, so that people know what to do and how to do it. It is necessary to develop educational materials as environmental aids for teachers and parents.

There are nothing supercomplex in environmental education, but we want to change human behaviors, and we want that our country has, for example, an image of the desired future. We can do it, and much is already being done by our environmental organizations. Enough of lecturing on swimming, put water into the swimming pool!

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## THE STATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN RUSSIA'S INSTITUTIONS OF GENERAL EDUCATION

Nobody, perhaps, doubts now that general environmental education is extremely important for the formation of environmental culture in the Russian population and, as a result, for the reduction of anthropogenic loads on the biosphere. The fact that the main accent of environmental education should exactly be on general-education school is obvious too. Today, school is the only social institution through which, one way or another, all Russia's population goes (children, directly, and parents and grandparents, indirectly). Moreover, school is a place where people may learn to coordinate their actions aimed toward improving the environmental situation in a region where they live and the country as a whole.

In addition, if we look at general-education school to find the shoots of new education in the interests of sustainable development, then today we can see them only where a system of environmental education has been established.

As is known, in addition to the environmental component, education in the interests of sustainable development also has social and economic components. But at school, neither social nor economic disciplines have demonstrated such shoots of education for sustainable development. And this is not by chance, since these subjects have a different logic, not tuned in to the ideas of sustainable development, and different goals and objectives. And if social and economic aspects are added to the content of environmental education, this is accepted well by both students and teachers, because of the specifics of environmental education, including its interdisciplinarity and complexity.

The content of environmental education, unlike many other subjects, is adjustable and flexible, because it is designed to reflect (and react to) changes that are taking place in our swiftly changing world.

The whole world pays the greatest attention to environmental education; so-called deep ecology – a psychological approach to environmental ethics – is becoming increasingly popular in Europe, the United States, and Australia. At present, environmental education is developing under a new slogan – education for sustainable development.

And only in Russia, things are quite to the contrary. We may fully agree that an explicit process of «deecologization» is under way in the country.

What is the cause of this process? It is the environmental ignorance of the population and, primarily, the environmental illiteracy of so-called «decision makers». And this illiteracy is traced back to secondary school, where environmentalism cannot find its due place.

The potential of environmental education with its general-culture component still remains unclaimed at the government level. The subject of environmentalism is not included (and will not be included in the foreseeable future) into the federal component of the basic curriculum. The Russian Ministry of Education and Science attempts to close down the All-Russian Environmental Olympiad for School Students, which

**The content of environmental education today is living through another modernization stage, and the school subject «environmentalism» is ousted from the basic curricula of Russia's institutions of general education. What is to replace it? Will Russia have environmental education?**

has to date been putting environmental education in demand all over Russia and which is an instrument to monitor the state of environmental education in the country.

According to the data gleaned from the All-Russian Environmental Olympiad for School Students, environmental education in its different forms is implemented in 71 regions of Russia (there are no data on 18 regions).

In the regions, environmental education is either realized as a model of continuous environmental education (grades one through eleven) at few general-education institutions, or is reduced to an elective at school (at best), or is completely transferred to the sphere of additional education.

Overall, formal environmental education in Russia is as closely integrated with informal (additional) education as no other subject. This situation is unique and, on the one hand, has its pluses in that it can use the potential of additional education, which is huge owing to its specifics: flexibility and variability, extended educational and instructional space, and practical activities. All this is still impossible at general-education school. But, on the other hand, such environmental education is not massive. Content variability and diversity of environmental education (each one in one's own way) does not make it possible to solve the main problems of environmental education.

The general content of environmental education in Russia is not determined by the educational standard (it just does not exist!), and one can often observe a situation when «each has his/her own environmentalism»! Many instructional complexes have been published in the regions; their contents not always agree with one another; and notions are interpreted differently. Russia has not worked out a general content ideology for environmental education. Individual regions introduce new subjects at their schools, which, in their opinion, can more efficiently solve the problems of environmental education. For instance, in Moscow, there will be a new subject from the 2007/08 school year, «Moscow Ecology and Sustainable Development», and in Tatarstan, «Earth's Charter».

Approximately 80% of the polled representatives of the Russian regions noted that they realize environmental education in schools with natural science-oriented grades 10–11. Practice shows that the demand for natural-science education is small in Russia. At best, a school would enroll one such natural science-oriented class, but, even in Moscow, not every school does it, to say nothing of other regions, where it is sometimes difficult to draft just one grade 10 (no students). The situation is especially difficult in rural schools, where, as a rule, children study until grade 9.

The content of environmental education in special classes, as a rule, is reduced to certain aspects of classical environmentalism (bioecology).

Environmental content is also present in other subjects: in elementary school, it is the Surrounding World; in secondary school, chemistry, biology, geography, physics, and basic safety. But, within the framework of these subjects, environmental content is not systemic. And the so-called «ecologization» of individual school subjects creates difficulties for teachers.

The representatives of only seven regions noted that they have environmentalism as a regional subject (i.e., it is the choice of the region). Nevertheless, at present, the regions have enough freedom to choose school subjects. For instance, in a number of regions, native languages (Adygeyan, Tuvan, Khakassian, Chuvash, Tatar, Mordovian, etc.), local history, the history of Orthodox culture, and even the Arabic language are taught as regional subjects. Unfortunately, environmentalism is still not an educational priority even at the regional level. In the majority of cases, environmental education is still the lot of enthusiastic teachers.

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## CREATING ELECTRONIC ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: THE INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS OF THE MOSCOW STATE UNIVERSITY OF CULTURE AND ARTS

Globalization and information/communication technologies, as signs of new times, are capable of not only changing the types of data accessing, storing, processing, and representing but also affecting knowledge itself and ways of transmitting and using it. Against the backdrop of great changes, technological and economic globalization has a tendency to introduce homogeneity into the surrounding world, to level national and historical differences, and to erase the signs of hereditary memory, whether they are related to the items of cultural legacy (monuments, historical city centers, etc.) or to their media, for example, language, etc.

At present, we are witnessing changes not only in the paradigm of social life but also in the paradigm of education.

Environmental education is the process of acquiring and internalizing environmental knowledge, skills, and practices, which is purposefully organized and systematically carried out at educational, enlightenment, and upbringing establishments, or acquiring this knowledge independently<sup>1</sup>.

Environmental upbringing is the process of continuous, systematic, and purposeful formation of an emotional/moral, humane, and careful attitude to nature and the moral norms of human behavior in the environment.

Environmental enlightenment implies the dissemination of environmental decisions and information about the state of the environment, natural resources, and environmental security in order to form the basics of environmental culture in society.

Environmental upbringing sets the task of forming human environmental behavior in the natural environment. The goal of environmental education is the formation of environmental thinking and personal environmental responsibility. This implies not only the accumulation of knowledge but also the making of environmentally correct and justified decisions, which require the understanding of complex interrelations that exist in the natural environment.

Environmental education and environmental upbringing are inseparable and constitute the basis for the formation of environmental worldviews in the population, i.e., the realization of the necessity to preserve the optimal habitat for the life of humanity.

Today, it is absolutely obvious that, in order to create an electronic resource, a web site, or any multimedia project in the sphere of culture ecology, it is necessary to have expertise not only in the field of computer technologies but also in the field of applied culturology, environmentalism, etc. Many candidates possess broad theoretical knowledge (from the HTML basics to the specificities of digital editing), but they lack professionalization and praxis, which would let them deepen and expand their know-how.

Thus, according to an e-Skills' (UK) survey, more than half of British specialists in information technologies fail to fulfill their duties because

**New educational approaches to the organization of electronic environmental projects are widely approbated at the Moscow State University of Culture and Arts. Master classes at international conferences, for instance, Electronic Visual Arts, and student multimedia and videos at the Russian Student Festival of Public Service Announcements are only a part of the large work conducted by the university.**

<sup>1</sup> Environmental Encyclopedic Dictionary (Neosfera, Moscow, 2002), p. 769 [in Russian].

of their low level of professional training. At the same time, the number of incompetent technical specialists is increasing year after year. The number of managers dissatisfied with IT specialists grew to 57% against 46% of those who questioned the qualifications of their subordinates last year (<http://www.cnews.ru/newtop/index.shtml/2003/08/08/147235>). This problem intensified by the end of 2006.

Multimedia technology is a promising and reliable means that allows the creator of educational texts (public service announcement, etc.) to provide larger arrays of information than the user may expect; vividly and in an integrated form, include not only text, graphs, and diagrams but also audios, animations, videos, etc.; select information types in successions that correspond to the logic of cognition and the perception tempo of a specific user.

Multimedia, being a form of creativity (not necessarily artistic), stimulates the role of scientific knowledge as a source of innovations and innovative decisions and suggests the opportunity for self-supportive technological growth and the creation of new intellectual technology, which allows the informational community to integrate more freely into global cultural processes, to possess a larger and constantly developing creative potential, and to look for the diverse and efficient forms and methods of personal self-actualization.

The search for new and effective forms of training information specialists for cultural establishments must, primarily, be carried out jointly as an «organization-customer-university» system, including the development of corporate projects.

We are speaking about a survival strategy against the background of demographic, economic, social, and cultural processes, unfavorable for the whole nation. Education – one of the most important factors of preservation and development – is conservative in its essence, because it is designed to transfer the accumulated experience of survival from former to future generations. However, the scale and rate of changes, which are taking place in Russia, as well as in the global community in general, and the global crisis phenomena in the biosphere and the technosphere objectively demand to transform the very system of education. In other words, instead of transmitting experience, which leads to a disaster, we should model the desired future, based on anticipatory (noospherically anticipatory) conscience. It is becoming obvious that the anthropogenic/industrial civilization, related to consumer-oriented humanism, should give place to an information/environmental, noospheric civilization, characterized by new forms of science and education and new concepts of rationality and humanism.

Educational programs must include personal education and development based on mass communications (media) in order to form a media

communication culture, creative and communicative abilities, critical thinking, and interpretational skills; to analyze and evaluate media texts; and to learn various forms of self-expression through media techniques. The content of media education is environmental problems in the media sphere and media-based practical creative tasks.

The involvement of students in multimedia-related projects promotes the formation of not only their practical skills in mastering multimedia programs but also, on the latter's basis, their introduction to creativity and the creation of their own resources (public service announcements, videos, animations, etc.).

The results of such projects may be seen in the works made by the students of the Moscow State University of Culture and Arts in various computer application programs (Macromedia Flash, ToonBoom, Photoshop, etc.) and dedicated to environmental topics, as well as to the preservation of cultural heritage. The examples of such projects are many: *Animal Life Is in Our Hands*, *Life in Furs or Living Furless*, *Let It Always Be Sunshine*, *Is It Right that Snow Was White?*, and many others. In addition, the leitmotiv of the whole system of environmental education and upbringing must drive the message that everything that we have «has not so much been inherited from our predecessors as has been borrowed from our future generations»; therefore, the degree of responsibility of each person is very high in the epoch of globalization.

New educational approaches to the organization of work on such projects, which have already been widely approbated at our university (within the framework of master classes at international conferences, for instance, *Electronic Visual Arts*; the *Russian Student Festival of Public Service Announcements*, which is held at the Moscow State University of Culture and Arts every year in the month of May; etc.).

Obviously, students, on entering the educational process where teachers use innovative educational forms (network initiatives, multimedia, electronic textbooks, tiered and modular teaching), begin themselves to use nontraditional forms of learning, alongside traditional ones. Thus students become not objects but agents of communicative interaction with nature and with one another. This is crucial for cooperative education.

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## THE CONCEPT OF LEGAL REGULATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

If so, do we need a separate law on environmental education, as many environmentalists insist? Or is it the Code of Administrative Offences that will form environmental culture in Russia? This article discusses the issue of a separate subject on legal regulation in the field of environmental education and the possibility of fixing the necessary notions in legislation.

The problems of upbringing, education, science, and culture, as well as environmentalism and environmental security, are, according to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, to be jointly dealt with by the federation and the federal constituents. Thus, legal relations in the sphere of environmental culture formation are regulated by both the federal legislation and the regional legislations.

At the federal level, the issues of forming environmental culture, environmental education, and environmental enlightenment are regulated by the following major acts:

- Russian Constitution (1993);
- Russian Law On the Environmental Protection, chapter 13 «The Basics of Forming Environmental Culture» (2002);
- Russian Law On Mass Media (1991);
- Russian Federation's Legislative Basics for Culture (1992);
- Russian Law On Education (1992);
- Russian Law On Especially Protected Natural Territories (1995);
- Russian Law On Production and Consumption Waste (1998);
- Russian Law On the Sanitary and Epidemiological Well-being of the Population (1999);
- Russian President's Decree On the State Strategy of the Russian Federation for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development, No. 236 of February 04, 1994.

Attempts of special regulation of environmental education at the federal level were twice rejected. In the mid-1990s, an attempt was made to develop the Federal Law On State Regulation for Environmental Education. The draft law was adopted by the State Duma and approved by the Council of the Federation; however, it was rejected by Russian President B.N. Eltsyn<sup>1</sup>. The reason for rejection was the fact that the proposed law «has no subject of regulation, since its main provisions are regulated by the Russian Constitution, the Russian Law On Education, the Federal Law On Product Supplies for Federal Needs, and the RSFSR Law On Environmental Protection. The review also noted contradictions between the proposed law and the active Federal Law On Education with regard to notions and definitions of environmental education, the system of continuous education, etc.

<sup>1</sup> Letter of January 6, 1999, No. Pr-14.

**Discussions on environmental culture contain two paradoxes. First, everybody knows that the absence of environmental culture is bad, but nobody can explain why its presence is good. Second, people who chronically criticize the state environmental policy pin their main hopes to state education as the main instrument of forming environmental culture. As a matter of fact, equally often we hear a point of view that the best instrument of forming environmental culture is administrative enforcement: penalties and other punitive measures.**

A further attempt to adopt a special federal law on environmental culture<sup>2</sup> was also a failure. The second updated version of this draft law was introduced to the State Duma in 2000. As a justification of the necessity to adopt the law were environmental threats in the country and the threats of depletion of its natural resources, related to a low level of environmental culture in society. The authors also stressed that the adoption of this federal law would allow reducing the volume of regulatory acts, establishing the priority of the highest legal acts – laws in this sphere of legal regulation. However, the draft law was excluded from the State Duma's consideration. In addition to political reasons (deferred interest to environmental issues), there also existed legal-technical problems: the draft law reproduced the errors of the previous one.

What are these errors and contradictions with general norms? The Draft Law On Environmental Culture contains the following special notions:

- environmental education is a continuous process of personal upbringing, learning, self-education, and development, aimed toward the formation of moral norms of human behavior;
- environmental upbringing is a process of continuous, systemic, and goal-oriented formation of emotional, moral, humane, and careful attitude in humans to nature and moral norms of behavior in the environment;
- environmental culture is an integral part of general human culture, which includes a system of social relations, moral values, norms, and ways of interaction between society and the natural environment.

We see that the definition of environmental education focuses on its special content, opposing it to the rest of education, which, by the logic of this definition, should not be aimed toward the formation of moral norms. Note that the definition of environmental education differs little from the definition of environmental upbringing. Moreover, it contradicts indeed the definition of education, contained in the core Russian Law On Education<sup>3</sup>. The latter understands education as a «goal-oriented process of upbringing and learning in the interests of the human being, society, and state, accompanied by the assertion that the citizen (learner) has reached educational levels (educational qualifications) set by the state». Studying the available version of the draft law on environmental culture, we see that it does not describe any new legal re-

lations, treating environmental education just as a «good» education, which must become compulsory.

Meanwhile, the laws on environmental education and upbringing are effective in 11 Russian regions<sup>4</sup> and are to be adopted in at least two more regions in the nearest future.

The analysis of eight active regional laws on environmental education and the formation of environmental culture shows that they keep accents similar to those in the federal draft laws. All definitions of environmental education contain the formulations «the process of forming value orientations, behavioral norms», but only the law of Kostroma oblast, adopted in July 2006, mentions «the realization of the regional educational standard».

It follows from the above definitions that the programs of environmental education and formation of environmental culture are aimed toward a change in personal values, outlook guidelines, and personal behavior. At the same time, the right of the state and educational establishments to form the values and outlooks of learners is limited by the provisions of the Russian Constitution on ideological diversity<sup>5</sup> and by the requirement of the Federal Law On Education. According to the latter, educational content should take into account the diversity of world-outlook approaches and promote the learners' right for the free choice of opinions and beliefs<sup>6</sup>. Similarly, The Russian Federation's Legislative Basics on Culture<sup>7</sup> declares the right of each person for personal cultural identity – a free choice of moral, esthetic, and other values<sup>8</sup>. To what extent and on what grounds may this principle be violated? To what extent is the state permitted to interfere in the formation of moral values and the establishment of relevant educational standards?

The ground for the regulation of legal relations in the sphere of environmental education is the Feder-

<sup>2</sup> Draft No. 90060840-3. Introduced by State Duma deputies V.A. Grachev, S.M. Akhmetkhanov, R.S. Bakiev, A.N. Greshnevnikov, V.D. Kadochnikov, A.N. Kosarikov, R.I. Nigmatulin, V.V. Olen'ev, O.N. Smolin, and A.N. Tomov.

<sup>3</sup> Russian Law On Education, No. 3266-1 of July 10, 1992.

<sup>4</sup> Kostroma oblast, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Irkutsk oblast, Volgograd oblast, Kamchatka oblast, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous District, Ulyanovsk oblast, Primorskii krai, Aginsko-Buryat Autonomous District, Republic of Bashkortostan, and Republic of Dagestan. Here, we do not name regions that adopted laws on target programs for the development of environmental education or corresponding regulatory acts of the executive power. You can read the texts of the laws in the corresponding section of the EKOM Expert Evaluation Center's web site: <http://ecom-info.spb.ru/themes/?id=38>

<sup>5</sup> Articles 13, 28.

<sup>6</sup> Article 14. General Requirements to Educational Content.

<sup>7</sup> Russian Federation's Legislative Basics on Culture (No. 3612-1 of October 9, 1992 in rev. of Federal Laws of June 23, 1999 No. 115-FZ, of August 22, 2004 No. 122-FZ, of December 31, 2005 No. 199-FZ, with amendments introduced by Federal Laws of December 27, 2000 No. 150-FZ, of December 30, 2001 No. 194-FZ, of December 24, 2002 No. 176-FZ, of December 23, 2003 No. 186-FZ).

<sup>8</sup> Article 11. The Right for Personal Cultural Identity.

al Law On Environmental Protection<sup>9</sup>. The law sets the organization and development of the system of environmental education and the upbringing and formation of environmental culture as a compulsory principle, realized by the bodies of state power of the federal constituents, local governments, and legal and physical persons when their activities impact the environment<sup>10</sup>. Thus, the legislator has set not only the obligation of environmental education and upbringing but also its relation to activities that may impact (obviously, materially) the environment. Article 73 of the Law On Environmental Protection directly points that the heads of organizations, responsible for making decision that may affect the environment, must be trained in the field of environmental protection and environmental security.

According to art. 55 of the Russian Constitution, the rights and freedoms of the human being and citizen may only be limited by the federal law and only to an extent that is necessary to protect the morals, health, rights and legal interests of other people.

Thus, compulsory environmental education may (and must) be introduced only to an extent aimed toward the prevention and reduction of environmental – careless, destructive, or aggressive – behavior. The proof of the material influence of anti-environmental stereotypes of everyday or professional behavior is the justification of the necessity to develop the relevant educational standards and model curricula.

However, there is another aspect of legal relations in the sphere of environmental education. According to art. 58 of the Russian Constitution, the preservation of nature and the environment and careful attitude to natural riches are the obligation of every Russian citizen. The requirement to protect the environment serves as a limitation to the owner's disposal of land and other natural resources (art. 36).

Taking into account the complexity of modern environmental problems, the scale of human activity impact, uncertainties of risk assessment, and long-term and indirect consequences of decisions made, it becomes obvious that the citizen's ability to fulfill his/her constitutional obligation are in direct relation to education received. Thus, we may state that the right of citizens to receive necessary environmental education follows from the obligation to protect the environment. The state is to ensure the quality and availability of corresponding educational services also by establishing educational standards and material, organizational, and

<sup>9</sup> No. 7-FZ of January 10, 2002.

<sup>10</sup> Article 3. The Main Principles of Environmental Protection.

information support for environmental educational programs.

In order to fix these legal relations in legislation, it is necessary to change the content of the legal notion of environmental education and introduce some additional definitions.

Environmental education is a process of upbringing and learning aimed toward the formation of value orientations, behavioral norms, and special knowledge, which encourage citizens to fulfill their obligations in the field of environmental protection<sup>11</sup>, form environment-oriented behavior, and which are accompanied by the statement that citizens (learners) have achieved educational levels established by the state.

The environmental educational minimum is the compulsory minimum of content of educational programs, which is established with regard to the levels of educational programs and which ensures that the learners obtain the basic set of knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill the obligations of environmental protection and to form consciously environment-oriented behavior.

Environment-oriented behavior (the culture of environmental behavior) is everyday actions based on everyday and professional habits and skills, which allow minimizing the negative impact of human activity on the environment and reducing environmental risks and threats to environmental security.

The term environmental educational minimum appears in regional legislations in different versions beginning with 1997 as a way to provide state guarantees for the quality of education<sup>12</sup>. However, only the 2002 law of Kamchatka oblast provides it with a special legal definition<sup>13</sup>. Unfortunately, this definition has the form of a closed list and therefore limits the subject and content of environmental education. Such an approach has certain risks; therefore, we suggest that a more general definition is used (see above).

<sup>11</sup> Notions defined by the federal law, in particular, in art. 1 of the Federal Law On Environmental Protection are italicized.

<sup>12</sup> See the laws of Ulyanovsk oblast, Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Khanty-Mansi Autonomous District, and Republic of Bashkortostan.

<sup>13</sup> The environmental minimum of educational content (hereinafter, the environmental minimum) is the compulsory minimum of the content of the main environmental educational programs set as components of the state educational standards, which includes the necessary for society and an individual minimum of knowledge about the ecosystemic organization of the environment and the use of its resources; the interaction between nature, the human being, and society; environmental problems; the timeliness and sustainable development of the human community at the regional, national, and global levels; and threats of losing the quality of the environment suitable for human life, as well as the environmental law (the Law of Kamchatka Oblast On Environmental Education in Kamchatka Oblast of October 15, 2002).

The content of environmental education may be set by law as general requirements and a list of questions of environmental education and enlightenment. The content of environmental education and enlightenment must be aimed toward providing the learner with the necessary knowledge and skills to fulfill requirements for protecting the natural environment, careful attitude to natural riches, which are basic for the sustainable development, life, and activity of peoples who live on Russian territory. Environmental education implies that learners obtain practical skills of environment-oriented behavior.

The sphere of environmental education and enlightenment should include the following fields of knowledge:

- nature, living organisms, the principles of ecosystem functionality;
- environmental security, the notion of a favorable environment, and the principles of the nondrain use of natural resources;
- the ecosystemic consequences of human impact on the environment, interrelation between human lifestyles and negative impacts on the environment;
- the effect of the quality of the environment on the development of society, interrelations between social, environmental, and economic problems;
- machinery, technologies, and engineering and organizational solutions, which help minimize or exclude negative impacts on the environment;
- environmental human rights and legal requirements in the field of environmental protection and environmental security; and
- the basics of environmental ethics, as well as other related issues.

In order to guarantee the learners that they receive the environmental educational minimum, the federal and regional governments develop and support the relevant components of the environmental educational standards. The state educational standards are to include, as established by the law, the above «questions of environmental education».

The state educational standards are only the basis for the development of educational programs and textbooks; educational establishments are responsible for their observance. Therefore, it is very important to fix legally procedures that would allow parents and the public to control the observance of these standards and the quality of educational services.

Within the framework of the proposed approach, it is also advisable to shift accents in the definitions

of environmental culture and environmental enlightenment and upbringing:

- environmental culture is an integral part of general human culture, which includes moral values, behavioral norms, ways of human interaction in the sphere of environmental protection, and the system of social relations that form them, and manifests itself in environment-oriented human behavior, the awareness of common responsibility for the quality of the environment, and high social significance of averting negative human impacts on the environment;
- environmental enlightenment is the dissemination of environmental knowledge, information about the state of the environment, the protection and nondrain use of natural resources, and other issues in order to form the basics of environmental culture in society;
- environmental upbringing is a process of goal-oriented formation of emotional, moral, humane, and careful attitude of the human being to nature, the moral norms of behavior in the environment, and acquaintance with the values and achievements of environmental culture.

The goal of the proposed approach is to shift from the imposition of environmental culture to the creation of conditions for its independent development, which would make it possible to improve the efficiency of implementing regional and federal programs for the formation of environmental culture.

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## **ENVIRONMENTAL CULTURE AND STATE POLICY**

The majority of specialists assess the environmental situation in the world as critical. Efforts aimed toward preventing the impending catastrophe are isolated and inefficient. Humanity is trying to solve the environmental problem by usual methods: by improving industrial technologies, by financial investments, and by adopting environmental laws. Traditional stereotypes, based on the anthropocentric paradigm, only aggravate contradictions between the progressively increasing needs of civilization and the relatively limited capacities of natural ecosystems. This leads to irreversible degradative changes in the biosphere – the natural human habitat – and will inevitably make this habitat unfit for human life. Thus, the main threat is hanging not over nature, because it will exist in a changed state as well, but over the human being, who will vanish from the surface of the planet as a species.

The international community sees a way out in implementing the concept of sustainable development, which implies the coevolution of nature and society, meeting the material and spiritual needs of the current generation and preserving such opportunities for future generations. A key condition for achieving sustainable development is the formation of environmental culture for each human being and society as a whole. Environmental culture helps transform social conscience and develop the environmental segment of conscience, environmental worldview, and environmental value orientations, which will grow into convictions. It is the current type of ecological consciousness that determines human behavior in relation to the environment. «...The essence of the problem, which humanity is facing at the current stage of its evolution, lies exactly in the fact that people have no time to adapt their culture to those changes that they themselves bring into this world, and the sources of this crisis lie within and not without the human being. The solution to all these problems is primarily in changing man and his inner essence». These words belong to Aurelio Peccei, the founder of the Club of Rome.

The idea of the necessity to form environmental culture has no opponents. It finds support at the official level (the State Duma, the Council of the Federation, and the Public Chamber) and in the structures of civil society. The concept of national security of the Russian Federation defines the fostering of environmental culture in the population as a priority trend in the state's environmental activities. At the same time, this sphere has not become an integral part of state policy. The Federal Law On the Protection of the Natural Environment, adopted 15 years ago, refers the formation of environmental culture in the population to the credentials of governmental bodies. However, bodies that are to deal with it have not been defined either at the federal or at the regional level. Today, the credentials for the formation of environmental culture in the population have been assigned to neither the ministries of education, nor the ministries of natural resources, nor the ministries of culture.

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At the same time, we should take into account that we are speaking about a long and extremely complex process, whose implementation requires serious efforts, theoretical basis, methodological foundations, and organizational mechanisms. It is necessary to coordinate the activities of several departments, public and nonprofit organizations, and other structures of civil society. First of all, we should agree on uniform approaches, terminology, and concepts. The hearings, held by the Public Chamber's Commission on Environmental Culture, have shown that even people who professionally deal with this problem hold not only different but often mutually exclusive opinions and approaches.

There are several definitions of the notion environmental culture, which reveal its meaning with different degrees of completeness:

- «The totality of experiences of human interaction with the natural environment, expressed as theoretical knowledge and moral norms, values, and cultural traditions, which ensure the formation of ecological consciousness and ways of practical interaction with this environment».
- «The totality of material and spiritual values, as well as ways of human activity, which harmonize the sociocultural process with the preservation of the natural environment».
- «An integral part of general human culture, which is formed during the life and activity of generations through continuous environmental education and enlightenment and which promotes healthy lifestyles, spiritual growth of society, sustainable socioeconomic development, and environmental security of the country and each individual».
- «The totality of norms, opinions, and orientations that characterize the attitude of society, its social groups, and individuals to nature».
- «The totality of knowledge, skills, and social and engineering norms that guide humans in realizing themselves (and acting accordingly) as a part of the natural environment and as agents responsible before themselves and the living and future generations for its preservation».

Without rejecting any of the above definitions, I prefer the first one (cited slightly edited). Perhaps, this is a somewhat subjective approach, since I took part in creating this definition together with N.F. Reimers, A.A. Verbitskii, I.D. Zverev, and S.N. Glazychev. This definition is included in the text of The Strategy for the Development of Environmental Education in the Russian Federation, approved by the board of the Ministry of Environmental Protection in September 1992.

The outstanding figure of Russian culture, Academician D.S. Likhachev introduced the notion culture ecology into culturology along with the term environmental culture: «Within the existing modern world, a special field of culturological knowledge was singled out into culture ecology. It embraces all components of modern human life: interrelations with nature, the life of society, and an individual human life».

Indeed, culture in its essence is highly ecological. It represents the mechanism of adapting human activity to the natural environment, and it is a specific form of human interaction with it.

Thus, environmental culture is a most important culturological phenomenon, which, however, does not go beyond the scope of general human culture but is its integral component.

As was said above, the main function of environmental culture is to serve as a vector of environmental orientation for social and personal conscience. In this connection, it is advisable to draw the most frequently cited definitions of ecological (ecocentric) consciousness:

- Ecological consciousness is a form of social conscience; an individual and collective ability to understand the inseparable relation of the human being and humanity with nature, the dependence of human well-being on the integrity and relative invariance of the natural human habitat, and the use of this understanding in practical activity.
- Ecological consciousness implies the totality of environmental concepts and the existing subjective attitudes to nature, as well as the relevant strategies and technologies of interaction with it.
- Ecological consciousness is the totality and level of concepts and worldviews with regard to the environment and the organization of life activities based on nature-preserving strategies and technologies.

The existing type of ecological consciousness determines the strategies of human behavior and the practical actions of people with regard to nature that surrounds them. The formed ecological consciousness functions as a kind of a limiter that regulates the character of interrelations between the human being, society, and nature, i.e., the level of anthropogenic impacts on the natural environment.

The above basic terms and concepts may be regarded as commonly accepted and provoking no serious objections. Things are much more difficult when we discuss the methodological issues of environmental culture formation and the organizational mechanisms of this process.

Traditionally, education and enlightenment of people is considered the main channel that translates cultural values. Naturally, the formation of environmental culture needs all the existing forms of education – formal (preschool, elementary general, principal, full secondary, additional, and vocational); informal, or what is usually called enlightenment; and the activities of public environmental organizations. During the hearings at the Public Chamber, some acclaimed and authoritative specialists doubted the efficiency of such an institution as general-education school. I think that this obvious misconception is rooted in the steadily negative situation, which resulted owing to the absence of a thoughtful state policy aimed toward the creation of a system of continuous environmental education. Despite the fact that the development and implementation of this system are envisaged in the above federal laws, it has never been introduced into Russian school.

Another fundamental misconception of many active followers of environmental education is the identification of this education with the school subject «Ecology». Environmental culture cannot be formed at a content-area level. Even deep and scientifically substantiated knowledge has little effect on the degree of ecologization of conscience and, consequently, on behavior. Many people who have committed actions that were monstrous in their consequences to nature have brilliant education. Knowledge is necessary, but it is only one of many factors that shape worldviews.

The creation of a society based on high moral principles and harmonized relations with the natural environment is only possible when cultural values are internalized on a mass scale. If we exclude the school education stage from this process, it will be doomed to failure.

Despite the exclusive importance of the school's role, which allows a larger part of the population of a certain age to get involved in the cultural-educational process, we should not forget about other forms. The most important and efficient of them are family upbringing and various forms of environmental enlightenment.

Over the past year, the problems of environmental culture were actively discussed at the national level. Parliamentary hearings were held in the State Duma and the Council of the Federation; the Russian government initiated the All-Russia conference «New Priorities of the National Environmental Policy in the Real Sector of the Economy». The Public Chamber initiated a series of events, which ended with a plenary meeting and an international conference. Resolutions and recommendations of all the above forums contain very correct thoughts and proposals. However, time

goes by, and the situation does not change. What else should happen to activate the solving of the state and society's most important problem?

I think that the Public Chamber must specifically and decisively put this question before the president and government of the Russian Federation.

Moreover, I think it advisable to single out from the large number of measures, enlisted in the recommendations of the public hearings, priorities that must activate the initial stage of this big work:

- to develop and adopt a strategy for the formation of environmental culture;
- to develop a conceptual model for the formation of environmental culture;
- to authorize the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Natural Resources, and the Ministry of Culture with specific credentials in the sphere of forming environmental culture in the population;
- to create an interregional resource information and methodological center with a bank of environmental information, modern educational and informational technologies, diagnostic methods to measure the level of environmental culture, and other instruments for the formation of environmental culture in the population; and
- to organize the work of a permanent roundtable on environmental culture under the State Duma's Committee on Culture.

**V.V. Misenzhnikov**

Director of the Ecology oblast educational center, Perm

## THE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF SPECIALISTS IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL CULTURE FORMATION

**At present, Russia has not formed a system of the professional training of specialists in the field of environmental culture formation. One of the few examples of implementing such programs is the training program for the workers of the environmental-enlightenment departments of national parks and reserves, implemented by the Zapovedniki EcoCenter under the leadership of N.R. Danilina.**

**This problem may be addressed by introducing the course «The Basics of Environmental-Enlightenment Work with the Population» into the curricula for the students of natural-science educational and environmental specialties. There have already been accumulated enough materials for such a course. We think that our leading universities, such as Moscow State University and the International Independent University of Environmental and Political Sciences, Moscow, could initiate the introduction of such programs into their curricula.**

**For students (educators and ecologists), professional training for the efficient implementation of the process of complex environmental education and enlightenment may include the following five blocks: environmental/theoretical, psychological/educational, environmental/humanitarian, naturalistic, and methodological.**

The environmental/theoretical training block includes mastering the skill of using the environmental potential of natural-science disciplines. This aspect of the environmental/educational training of students was largely covered within the framework of the course «Nature Protection», which was read to the students of all specialties at the majority of educational universities. The course was based on multilateral and interdisciplinary relations and performed integrating and backbone functions in developing adequate environmental concepts in students.

This, synthetic in its content, academic course rested on a complex of natural sciences and was designed to form a wholesome picture of the system «the human being – society – nature» in students. This course revealed a number of basic concepts: the main regularities of the organization of biological systems (organisms, populations, species, biocoenoses, biogeocoenoses, and the biosphere), their hierarchy, integrity, and interrelationship; the scientific and technological revolution as a reflection of anthropogenesis in the evolution of the biosphere; the rational use of natural resources; nature protection and transformation; and the optimization of the natural environment as nature-society interaction management.

The course «Nature Protection» formed the understanding that society and the biosphere are in the state of coevolution; that, being a part of nature, the human being must observe its laws. Human activity should not be opposed but harmoniously integrated into the biospheric laws, etc.

The environmental/humanitarian training block implies the improvement of future teachers' erudition in environment-oriented fiction, the creative activities of nature writers; art criticism, focusing on nature in fiction, music, and visual arts. An important place is given to training teachers in the aesthetic analysis of natural objects and the ethical conceptualization of their vital manifestations, as well as in the understanding of the ethics of interrelations between the human being and the world of nature. The teacher's ability to reveal the humanistic meaning of interaction between a person and the world of nature is the most important professional condition for efficient environmental education and developing attitudes to nature.

The naturalistic training block for future teachers implies the formation of practical skills and abilities to interact with natural objects (plants and animals) both in the natural environment and in the indoor conditions, as well as in the anthropogenic environment.

A complex of environmental technologies to be mastered by teachers includes research skills: the observation of natural objects; their identification, including identification by track, voice, nest, etc.; the rules of behavior in the natural environment; and the bioengineering and other nature-protection strategies and technologies. The technological training of teachers for the competent keeping of plants and animals in the educational environment implies proficiency in the biology, morphology, physiology, and taxonomy of relevant natural objects; the development of abilities and skills to manufacture and technically equip devices for keeping them; mastering biotechnical data about feeding, keeping, and breeding natural objects; mastering veterinarian and phytopathological techniques;

the understanding of the basics of the aesthetic decoration of demo structures; etc.

The psychological/educational training block implies both general psychological/educational training: general, age, and educational psychology and the theory and history of education, and special training: the psychology of ecological consciousness and ecological pedagogy. The psychology of ecological consciousness considers the developmental regularities of the system of human environmental concepts, their subjective attitudes to the world of nature, the choice of strategies and technologies of interaction with natural objects. The mechanisms of the development of personal ecological consciousness are revealed; the processes of its ontogenetic development are demonstrated; the evolution of socioecological consciousness in the process of sociogenesis is analyzed; the methods of the psychological measuring of subjective attitudes to nature are shown; a typology of human attitudes to nature and the characteristics of different types of such attitudes are provided; etc. Ecological pedagogy equips teachers with the idea of the essence of an ecologic person and the principles, methods, and techniques of its formation. The content and forms of the process of environmental education are analyzed; the efficiency of different educational strategies in environmental education in the world is considered; etc.

Finally, the methodological block implies the comprehensive methodological and technological training of teachers, providing them with a complex of educational skills for the efficient environmental education of schoolchildren. It includes excursions to the world of nature, the organization of environmental training trails or environmental summer camps, the preparation of environmental school fests, the development and implementation of different environmental games, the organization of environmental child movements, etc. The methodological training of teachers includes the mastering of several special skills. The teacher must possess decorating skills in order to create together with schoolchildren boards, wall newspapers, and environmental booklets; the teacher must be able to draw natural objects from nature, including in field conditions, in order to illustrate the diary and participate in the creation of a school environmental gallery; the teacher must be familiar with photo and movie-making skills in nature in order to create school photo and movie libraries; the skills of recording natural sounds for the audio library; the skills of collecting both natural objects (tracks, seeds, feathers, etc.) and their symbols (postage stamps, badges, emblems, etc.); the skills of floristics and phytodesign; the skills of applied arts, using natural materials; etc.

Another way of training specialists is the implementation of advanced retraining programs for different specialists related, one way or another, to environmental activities. We already have the

successful experience of implementing the program «The Basics of the Formation of Environmental Culture in the Population» in Russian regions, in particular, in Perm krai under the auspices of Professor V.V. Misenzhnikov. The program is aimed toward the creation of professionally trained initiative groups of different specialists in the regions who will later actively carry out the national environmental policy. A training group of 15–20 members may include researchers and university, school, and daycare teachers, as well as instructors in additional education (at environmental and biological child centers, etc.), museum workers and librarians, specialists of environmental services, workers of national parks and reserves, activists of environmental nongovernmental organizations, representatives of municipal governments and religious confessions, students, etc. The results of participation in this program may differ for different categories of participants. Some of them (for instance, university teachers) may focus on the methodological mastering of the program in order to conduct it independently later on with other participants. For others, this is an opportunity to expand their vision of environmental problems in the humanitarian sphere; still others will gain a solid proof of their thoughts that work with the grassroots is the most important and that it is often underestimated and criticized by their closest colleagues; finally, for all, this is an opportunity to get in with like-minded colleagues for further joint actions and mutual support.

The implementation of this educational program is to be based on a broad use of interactive methods (trainings, role games, case studies, contests, etc.) in three stages of one week each. At the same time, the individual student training load standard of 54 hours per week is to be observed. The training ends in the defense of a graduation project and the vesting of a certificate. All the participants in the program are to receive sets of methodological literature. The content of the program contains five main sections: «The Sociopsychological Basics of Efficient Interaction», «The Formation of Environmental Culture in the Population as a Priority of the Russian National Environmental Policy», «The Historical and Philosophical Basics of Environmental Culture Formation», «The Psychological Basics of Environmental Culture Formation» and «The Educational and Organizational/Methodological Basics of Environmental Culture Formation». Each section especially focuses on the specific problems of the region where the program is to be implemented.

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## CULTURE CURE

At the public hearings «Environmentalism and Culture», organized by the Public Chamber's Commission for Environmental Security and Protection (Russian Public Chamber, January 25, 2007), I represented the public expert council under the State Duma's Committee on Culture. This public entity unites the representatives of all segments of Russian culture. The council represents writers and artists, librarians and museum workers, as well as political and legal culture, social and educational culture, civic and information culture, and, of course, environmental culture.

Moreover, environmental culture in all its totality of cultural trends is, no doubt, taking a priority place. Its significance will continue to grow. Because the situation is such, and everybody knows it perfectly, that we are not only to save the fauna and flora but primarily human beings and their souls. Therefore, spiritual environmentalism is naturally becoming the highest priority of environmentalism.

I should note with deep satisfaction that environmentalists are coming to understand that the initial and firstborn basis for environmentalism is the spiritual and moral values of the life of a people. Be order in it, environmentalism will, no doubt, continue to gain momentum.

The Public Chamber hearings rightly addressed environmental education, environmental rearing, the dissemination of environmental culture, etc. All this is, no doubt, important, but another truth is of no less importance: environmental culture, like any culture, is not only a complex of knowledge, it is also a totality of skills, which gradually transform into an invariable habit. It is not enough just to expose a certain category of people to useful and necessary knowledge. It goes in one ear and out the other. People listen and forget. By all means, received knowledge should be reinforced with practice.

It is very important now, without relaxing attention to environmental education and environmental rearing, to focus on the practical implementation of received knowledge and the real transformation of this knowledge into publicly significant initiatives, movements, and undertakings.

Now the State Duma's Committee on Culture supports the idea of rolling out the All-Russian movement «For Clean Life». We know that around every city, around every village, and around every settlement, there are many dumps and mounds of waste. This waste is not only poisons our life but penetrates our souls and distorts and pollutes our thoughts and world outlooks. We are getting used to this. If we help the popular movement «For Clean Life» to grow and result in clean yards, clean cities, clean villages, clean hands, and then clean souls, everything will change for the better.

The totality of problems and links of environmental science with life has a key link and a decisive point of support. This is municipalities. If we drive it home to the municipalities that they are the central link of life and that only their assistance and participation may really change

**Culture has its supreme values: beauty, knowledge, and love. This great triad has a universal character. It is important for environmental culture. The point is that beauty is the truth's dress. Struggling for the truth, environmentalists must focus on beauty. Then environmentalism would also be more attractive for people and would allow them to implement more actively and efficiently transformations dictated by life.**

anything locally, then environmentalism will be gaining a more powerful momentum in the everyday life of every citizen. Environmentalism should be not a private matter of environmentalists but a personal matter of the whole people. And only popular movements and mass public initiatives will be able to add to the available knowledge the habit of acting and living under environmental priorities.

The second point that I would like to mention is that the state of environmental thinking is directly related to a social situation, which is emerging in society, and to the unbearable social contrasts, which are so typical of our life. Recently, I had a chance to travel through Orel, Ryazan, and Voronezh oblasts. I saw serious environmental problems, especially on farmlands. I asked: Why did you let it happen? They bitterly replied: the situation is so bad that we feel discouraged. Every year, agricultural products stay underpriced, while fuel-and-lubricant and machinery prices keep growing. They say that they work as hard as they can but become poorer. And our oligarchs – the owners of oil and gas companies – doubled their fortunes in the past two years.

This social anomaly is a reality of our life. It is before the eyes of the people, and it generates protest and exasperation. And when you start speaking about environmentalism, you get an answer: «Our house is on fire, and you advise us to water flowers».

Indeed, unfavorable tendencies, which lead to increased social tension in society, are growing. The gap between the poles of the rich and the poor is not getting smaller but growing larger. It is clear that the power is not doing all it can here. And it is still not quite clear what should be done and how it should be done. It is perfectly obvious that it cannot and should not go on like that forever. We seem to forget the great Plato's testament: «Do not put anything before justice» (Plato, Works in 4 vols.; Vol. 1: Crito, p. 110).

Environmental pollution is only one problem that shakes our society. There are other problems, no less destructive. They are, as already said above, crying social inequality, ethnic discords and conflicts, and unseen corruption. Here we must also mention the monstrous crime rate, drug addiction, extremism, terrorism, neglect of agriculture and public housing, etc. Attempts are, of course, made to cure all these abscesses of our society. But the desired results have not been seen so far. What is the reason? The main reason, in our opinion, is in the fact that each problem is treated pointwise, separately from other diseases.

Today, it is increasingly obvious that the pointwise treatment of separate problems of a generally ill society is hopeless. Time has come to look into the root cause, the spiritual and moral state of society,

and realize that all our troubles and problems may be cured and the fundamentally lopsided spiritual and moral axis of people's life may be straightened out only systemically and wholesomely.

Indeed, the deep source of all Russia's problems and troubles is spiritual ignorance, the elementary lack of culture, and social deformity, which penetrate into all the pores of the state and social organism and corrode the spiritual and moral life of the people.

If this is so, then a question arises: how to cure them? Do we have a medication capable of curing all these chronic diseases?

There is such a medication. This is our Great Culture. Our country keeps preserved a considerable underestimation of the decisive significance of culture in transformations dictated by life and a deep misunderstanding of the fact that Culture and only Culture can serve as the prime basis for the construction of the future. It is possible to cure our ill society only by relying on all the inexhaustible spiritual and moral potential of Culture.

The crucial and decisive function of culture is human creativity. It comes out of the highest mission of culture: to create and form human beings and their spiritual world. It is culture that constitutes the eternal and indestructible shelter where the human spirit finds ways to the luminous and beautiful. Culture also gives a bright and clear answer to the most burning questions of contemporaneity: what beauty, perfection, culture, justice, and good are, and what, reversely, ignorance, ugliness, wildness, barbarity, and evil are.

Only Culture in its variety of opportunities is capable of harmonizing the hard world of passions, which are shaking Russia; gradually subduing the increasing exasperation; promoting the restoration of social, international, and ethnic equilibrium in society; mobilizing the unification of society for the sake of Russia's highest interests; initiating the mass development of creativity; and forming a new generation of spiritually rich and highly moral people, who see their goal in the prosperity of their Motherland. Only a culture-cured society may expect a broad inflow of truly innovative ideas, capable of a substantial breakthrough in the economy, which would start working not for the oligarchs but for the harmonious development of a society of creators and not destructors. And the role of environmentalists in the spiritual and moral transformation of society must constantly increase. We must learn to approach qualitatively new problems raised by life itself.

Going back to the topic of social inequality, I would like to stress again that justice must be restored. This is an eternal problem, which goes back to Christ. In which direction should we keep searching? The past century brings us to very

significant conclusions: the main and most obvious of them is that, in a new lap of transformations dictated by life, the foundation of the future transfiguration of the world must not be the overwhelming (and thus dangerous for creative civilizational and cultural efforts) revolutionary sword of justice but, primarily, the overpenetrating and highly developed creative culture and spirituality of humanity as a whole. The problem is to fill these categories with real content. And here again, culture comes to the fore with its extremely rich and diversified tools.

The present stage of evolution of human civilization opens unseen opportunities before culture. Today more obvious becomes the inexhaustibility of culture, the inexhaustibility of the word, the inexhaustibility of persuasion, the inexhaustibility of all arts in their complex impact on people's minds and hearts, and the inexhaustibility of environmental postulates. As the scientific and technological revolution, having greatly expanded the capabilities of technical creativity, has created the conditions and prerequisites for a true industrial breakthrough in production, science, social and political practices, education, services, and everyday life, culture today, equipped with the latest achievements of scientific and technological progress and realizing the needs of public life, related to the amplification of spiritual and moral influence on all social strata, is equally on the verge of an unseen leap in mastering the qualitatively new tools of affecting people's hearts and minds and reducing isolated and spontaneous masses to a common denominator and a uniform understanding of the inevitable stringency of finding ways to spiritual harmony, social equilibrium, mutually beneficial cooperation, and creative interaction in solving all global and regional problems face by humanity. Only taking the path of comprehending and unveiling the huge creative potential of culture, which has the power of changing reality, i.e., mastering new knowledge, and of establishing a new way of life and new moral values, it is possible to start actually building a healthy and happy society, based on justice, trust, brotherhood, and the great solidarity of peoples. And, of course, environmentalists are to play the most important role in transformations dictated by life.

If we come to a conviction that it is Culture that represents the highest and eternal value and serves as the basis for construction of the future, a question arises how to make it the cornerstone of transformations dictated by life and the engine of urgent reforms?

A turn to culture must, primarily, take shape in politics. Reforms must not contradict the natural aspirations of humans. A system of views and ideas is viable if it is based on Culture's ideals and values and if it is capable of forming a society of rational

existence, focused on improving life: To live better and better! To live in greater harmony with nature! Only such a policy should be called a policy of rational existence.

This is the policy with which Culture should deal. Putting culture at the basis of politics, the state makes politics an effective evolutionary force, fair and expedient. Politics outside culture has a destructive character and yields a destructive impact on culture. Equally, culture without specific cooperation with politics is isolation and therefore is doomed to impotence. The synthesis of these two spheres is the key to solving the problems of Russia's future. This future is seen not as a technical or scientific problem but, primarily, as an ethical one. If politics and/or economics, both in Russia and in the rest of the world, aggressively impose economic «globalization» without previously creating the necessary ethical foundation, this will lead to the emergence of an even stronger counteraction to conflicts.

The ascension of culture to the pedestal of the highest values must not be spontaneous. The state should thoughtfully and purposefully adjust this process. For this, it is necessary to create a special state-run research center – the Research Center for Spiritual Culture, which would deal with sociocultural engineering and evaluate and develop new forms and tools for the spiritual transfiguration of people. The environmental theme must, no doubt, occupy a decent place there.

Culture has its supreme values: beauty, knowledge, and love. This great triad has a universal character. It is important for environmental culture. The point is that beauty is the truth's dress. Struggling for the truth, environmentalists must focus on beauty. Then environmentalism would also be more attractive for people and would allow them to implement more actively and efficiently transformations dictated by life.

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## WHO FORMS ENVIRONMENTAL CULTURE

Environmental culture is a new notion for postindustrial society. It came into active use at the end of the 20th century. In its general sense, it implies the culture of human life in harmony with nature. However, cross-cultural research shows that environmental culture has been the core of the life of all peoples since ancient times. It organically manifested itself in lifestyles and labor, popular pedagogy, cultural traditions and customs. Environmental culture has always been the basis for human adaptation to the natural environment, the condition of preserving human health and ensuring human security. However, in contemporary life, under the conditions of human alienation from nature and the long stay in the artificial urbanized environment, the conscience of the majority of people is forming the myth of the technical protection and independence of humans from the natural environment, and the problem of environmental culture is seen as something atavistic.

Sociologists, studying the developmental trends of postindustrial society, have come to the conclusion that the rapid development of technical achievements and the growth of humanity today outpace the psychic abilities of the majority of people to realize the diversity of consequences of these phenomena for the environment, health, and life security. At the end of the 20th century, complex scientific investigations proved the limitedness of space and resources on the planet Earth. The necessity of keeping the population proportionate to the resource capacities of the biosphere has become increasingly urgent. It was expressed in the well-known concept of sustainable development, adopted by the international community. Psychologically, the members of a new society face the inevitable necessity to foster the «discipline of desires, thought, and will». To learn to restrain oneself «in the thick flow of life» without interfering with other people is the starting point of self-education. In the absence of self-restriction, the human being goes beyond the boundaries of personal abilities and falls into bigotry and zealotry. Certain asceticism is not as bad as it is painted, wrote Ivan Efremov, a great thinker and sci-fi writer. It is important for the human being to learn self-restriction since childhood. As a matter of fact, if there are unlimited opportunities to satisfy everyday needs, humanity will soon turn into a giant multilingual theater of everyday tragedy. In relation to this, I think that, among the many definitions of the culture concept, the most acceptable one for environmental education is «self-restriction in human consumption, actions, and behavior in the environment based on an environmental imperative».

Environmental culture, which manifested itself in the psychological readiness and practical ability for self-restriction, relates to different spheres of human life: behavioral stereotypes in the socionatural environment, lifestyles, actions, decision making in professional activities. The formation of environmental culture is a tremendous global process of changing human mentality due to the rapid growth of the direct dependence of the economy, social security, and human

**Two «customers» are interested in the formation of environmental culture – society and the state.**

health on environmental factors. And the reverse dependence of environmental factors on the prevailing consumer principles of human activity in the environment. According to the UN World Decade Strategy for Education in the interests of sustainable development until 2015, it is important to change educational objectives: to shift from the transfer of knowledge and skills necessary for existence in modern society to a stronger outpacing function of education. This implies the formation in the young people of readiness to act and live in a hardly predictable world of the future and swiftly changing environmental and socioeconomic conditions. The skills of graduates to project their activity in the socionatural environment with regard to its environmental, social, and economic consequences; to participate in planning the social development of a territory with regard to its sustainable development are becoming more and more in demand.

Environmental culture may be viewed as a regulator of socially favored behaviors, actions, and conducts in the environment. The world practice of the past 30 years shows that it can be formed relatively quickly in society as a result of targeted exposure of individual and public conscience to complex incentives (explanations, rewards) and restraints (censures, punishments). Incentives include traditions, education, and enlightenment. Restraints include legal standards that regulate human (or group) behaviors and actions, and, if violated, financial penalties and administrative or criminal liabilities.

Two customers are interested in the formation of environmental culture – society and the state. Each has its own «levers and mechanisms» of placing social orders in public and state institutions. Public organizations, movements, summits, councils, and initiatives mainly actualize the attention of the authorities and population to the necessity to learn environmental principles and rules of environmental attitudes. The main mechanism here is various forms and levels of enlightenment.

The state declares in different official documents its understanding of the urgency of forming environmental culture. However, in practice, we see a great gap between the intentions and actions of the authorities. This is related to such important levers of influence on human conscience as education and law. Let me briefly deal with the problems of environmental education.

From the beginning of the 21st century, opposite actions were taken at different levels of education. Partial dismantling of the federal system of general environmental education and training of teachers in this sphere, which was created in the 1990s, occurred in the system of general education school. In the constituents of the Russian Federation, on

the contrary, the process of creating a regional legislative framework for the development of regional systems of environmental education is under way. However, the deficit of professionals and the scarcity of financial means hinder the practical implementation of adopted laws and resolutions. The system of higher vocational training (which has a larger autonomy) is strengthening and developing environmental topics and expanding environmentally oriented professions.

In general, the analysis of numerous scientific and applied texts on environmental culture is characterized by the «obliging» and desired form of its treatment. So far, we find only singular descriptions of actions of executive authorities necessary to form environmental culture. This gives grounds to speak that this process is primarily developing on a voluntary basis in different forms of education and enlightenment, and the state influences weakly its development.

I think that, at the present stage, the efforts of the Public Chamber should be channeled to make the federal government adopt target measures for the development of environmental culture in three spheres that form public conscience – enlightenment, education, and law. In addition, it is important that these measures be of interlinked nature. It is especially important to focus on the system of institutions of general education. In their activities, the formation of environmental culture is beyond the vision of the federal authorities, which is automatically reflected in the work of the majority of regional departments of education. Educational science has developed alternatives how to improve this work with regard to the current conditions of modernization of school education.

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## THE VALUE-WORLDVIEW BASICS OF ENVIRONMENTAL CULTURE

Many factors have turned environmentalism into a worldview. Energy and raw-material crises have shown that natural resources are exhaustible and either a sharp drop in their production or their sharp appreciation may be expected in the nearest future. The intellectual forces of Russia and other countries started looking for a way out of this situation primarily by solving technological problems. Leading European countries started moving from the use of hydrocarbons to renewable energy sources; for instance, Denmark is approaching a 20% use of alternative energy sources in its economy. However, not all countries have chosen such an active way of «ecologizing» the economy, and the scale of environmental destruction in some places have reached such a level that the introduction of new environmentally friendly and energy-saving technologies is explicitly lagging behind the huge inflow of crisis phenomena in nature. Moreover, while some countries have already taken the road of environmental innovations in managing their economies and have started adopting strict restrictive measures and laws, the so-called countries of the third world, being in the initial stages of the industrial revolution, use, as a rule, old technologies and methods to extract natural resources, which negatively affects the global environmental balance. The sustainable development of the Netherlands is, in fact, crossed out by the environmental pollution produced by the United States, China, African countries, etc.

The global desire to end this crisis is reflected in the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gases, in the UNESCO international convention on the protection of especially valuable territories — the World Natural Heritage, and other international projects and initiatives.

Concurrently, the works of the Club of Rome, forums on sustainable development, large international conferences, and the works of individual scientists and research teams are increasingly voicing the idea that, first of all, it is necessary to form environmental conscience, that, if our world is to have future, it will come not so much through technological progress or the formation of «information society» (which, during globalization, tends more and more towards the «golden billion») but rather along the ways of coevolutionary development of the human being and nature. And coevolutionary development implies the formation of environmental culture.

This, in turn, requires many conditions. First, the clarification of the very notion of environmental culture. Material results have already been reached here thanks to the works of M.S. Kogan, E.S. Markaryan, Yu.G. Markov, V.A. Yasvin, and many other philosophers and environmentalists. As a result, a number of important problems were revealed. For example, at present, it is hardly possible to employ the entire potential of environmental culture, which humanity has accumulated under the conditions of traditional nature management, reinforced by religious outlooks. However, we should not totally ignore

**The emergence of the notion of environmental culture at the end of the past century and the initiated active theoretical conceptualization of this notion, supported by a number of practical actions, primarily, in the sphere of environmental education and upbringing, was a very important and symptomatic phenomenon. In fact, this meant that environmentalism was increasingly turning from a science into a worldview. Of course, this does not mean that scientific conceptualization and a wide range of human actions aimed toward preserving the environment has become less important. On the contrary, joint environmental efforts have increased internationally, especially on behalf of nongovernmental organizations; global processes are being studied.**

this unique experience; so, a theoretical and applied problem arises: to transfer the past experience to the present conditions and to develop the mechanisms of adaptation of the positive examples of nature management of the past epochs to the contemporary conditions. Moreover, it is necessary to determine the worldview basis for modern environmental culture. The second problem lies in the following: at the level of everyday conscience, it is more or less clear what is meant by cultural and anticultural environmental human behavior. But this is clearly not enough for the development of educational programs, legislative projects, etc. It is necessary to clarify this notion, which is not a very simple task if we take into account the many definitions of culture itself.

The Moscow international declaration on environmental culture, adopted May 7, 1998, gives the following definition: «Environmental culture implies such a livelihood under which society, through a system of spiritual values, ethical principles, economic mechanisms, legal norms, and social institutions, forms needs and ways of meeting them that create no threat to the life on Earth».<sup>1</sup>

This definition implies the unity of the human being and nature and asserts the significance of value orientations, and, in fact, puts the problem of developing the mechanisms of coevolutionary development. But it is based, in our opinion, on certain «involuntariness»: we are forming environmental culture only because we will not survive otherwise. This involuntariness cannot be a worldview basis for new environmental conscience, and the absence of such a basis creates pragmatism, which will always put to the fore «human» interests in contempt of the interests of nature.

At the same time, all through the 20th century, a doctrine was developed that may fully serve as such a basis – the theory of the noosphere, mainly in its initial version, developed by its founders E. Le Roy, P. Teilhard de Chardin, and V.I. Vernadsky. We stress this fact because, after the works of the first noospherologists, the noosphere, the sphere of reason, started to be treated too broadly. Modern researchers see the noosphere as the totality of human creations. At the same time, the humanistic pathos and the ideals of spiritual perfection and the highest human responsibility for human evolution and the planet's evolution go to the background. New conditions need a clarification that rational human activity may be represented as a minimum in its three hypostases – the noosphere – «the horrible noosphere», which includes weapons, wars, violence, etc. – everything that destructs life as it is; the

low-cased noosphere that provides for humans as natural bodily creatures; and, finally, the true Noosphere with the capital letter, in which the forces of nature and humans create the blessed synthesis. Based on this interpretation of the noosphere, we also see the notion of culture anew.

True culture should include everything in the noosphere that directs the human being to the supreme, that is, permeated and controlled by true values. These supreme values set the ideal of noospheric existence, forming, although still ideally, what was called above the Noosphere with the capital letter.

Today, as is known, quite a number of researchers acknowledge a general systemic crisis of the human-induced consumer model of global development. This model reigned for the past centuries and is now most vividly represented by the Western developed countries.

The essence of this type of societal organization is oblivion to the spiritual «vertical» of existence and the absolutization of the «horizontal» and «bodily» dimension of the world. It is not the supreme human ideals and values that determine and order the lower forms of human life, but, on the contrary, the lowest passions and material interests subordinate the supreme. In society, spiritual culture (religion, philosophy, and arts) becomes a stepdaughter of engineering and economics, and the engineering-economic «womb» of civilization, on the contrary, occupies the place of its reason and heart. The «bottom» and the «top» of culture swap places.

The essence of the Noosphere-culture is in the fact that scientific and technological advance; the production of material goods and services; and political, financial, and economic interests must be not the goal but a means of harmonizing relations between society and nature and establishing the supreme ideals of human existence: eternal cognition, all-round creative development, and moral perfection. As our earthly body must serve the spirit, so the economy and technology must serve spiritual culture. Only spiritual culture ensures the reproduction of the human being as the Human Being, as a spiritual and moral creature.

Respectively, when determining whether this or that object or phenomenon belongs to the sphere of culture, we must use the main criterion: whether it harmonizes with the hierarchical system of values and needs.

All this, in turn, allows us at least to contour the characteristics of the formation of the value basics of environmental culture. Since environmental culture is part of general human culture, then,

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in V. A. Yasvin, *The Formation of Environmental Culture (Akropol', CREP, Moscow, 2004)* [in Russian], p. 6.

investigating the value core of culture in general, we are approaching the solution to the problem set in this article.

Let us briefly recall that the issue of supreme values, Truth – Beauty – Good, is key for philosophy. After the separation in the New Time in Europe of the single body of culture – religion, philosophy, science, and artistic creativity – into independent and often even opposing branches, after the secularization of culture, the issue of objective or subjective character of the supreme values arose anew. Two opposing lines of philosophy and worldview emerged on each side of it. One held that the source of values was the human being itself, and, consequently, humans determine the order of values. In this case, we may bring to the fore the value of comforts of bodily existence, which forms the cult of consumption, the human predator, the egoist, for whom nature, for instance, is «Bazarov's workshop» at best, and more often, an object of violence and plunder. The environmental crisis is largely the result of this prevailing worldview. The other group of thinkers – in Russia, these are V. Solov'ev, P. Florenskii, N. Losskii, and others; among scientists, Vernadsky; and in the West, M. Scheler, N. Hartmann, A. Schweitzer, J. Maritain, E. Fromm, and the theologian and anthropologist Teilhard de Chardin – asserted, one way or other, the objective character of the supreme values and, above all, their predetermined hierarchical order, *ordo amoris*. This order is not random, and its conscious adoption brings order to human existence in the world. And within this order, nature – Life – is a value in itself.

Here we can make a preliminary conclusion with the regard to the formation of environmental culture at a new historical stage. Obviously, a further separation of spiritual pursuits, philosophy, science, and arts will provoke antispiritual and antienvironmental worldviews; therefore, the new level necessitates steps toward a synthetic worldview. It is also obvious that this worldview must be based on modern worldview paradigms – synergetics, global evolutionism, and noospheric theory, which would help reveal new facets in the objective character of the Supreme values.

Thus, in the development of philosophical grounds for environmental culture, we may specify the main criterion of assessing this or that phenomenon (action program, methodology, technology, etc.): the assertion of rejection of the basic human values – knowledge, beauty, and good. The rejection of these values leads, directly or indirectly, to the rejection of the life values as well.

Speaking about the value of knowledge and its place in environmental culture, we should stress

that now knowledge is often interpreted as pure information, and unsystematized into the bargain. The point that such «knowledge» dissociates society and has nothing to do with knowledge as a supreme value is quite obvious. The Western European tradition most often understood knowledge as rational scientific knowledge. As is known, scientism has fully separated the value of such knowledge and the value of the scientific truth from other values. The 20th century has vividly demonstrated that rational knowledge separated from spiritual values becomes emasculate and even dangerous; it is this knowledge that leads humanity to disasters; that is, it also starts opposing not only the values of good and beauty but also life itself.

The value of beauty receives increasingly more philosophical and even natural-scientific justification with each epoch. Already Losskii stated that «the gloating of beauty ... is the beholder's focus on the objectively valuable and not the enjoyment of one's organic sensation or abilities».<sup>2</sup>

Many scientists now prove the ontological essence of beauty; moreover, they justify the objective laws that lie at its basis. Thus, V.I. Samokhvalov thinks that, since nature itself pursues to improve the level of harmonic orderliness, then beauty in the arts acquires a new meaning – a new anti-entropic level emerges here; beauty in its conception opposes entropy. «In creativity, humans seem to continue, with their inherent means, the course of world organization, which was begun by nature, not only by restoring the world's beauty but also by creating its new existence... Before the human being, harmony and beauty would emerge as a result of elemental processes of self-organization in nature; with the advent of humans, the creation of harmony and beauty becomes a conscientious and goal-oriented human activity in organizing the surrounding world and establishing the human content of order».<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the objectivity of the principles of beauty and harmony and their foundation on natural laws makes inseparable the very principles and values of beauty and knowledge.

Here is an eloquent and deep thought of Florenskii on the relation between beauty and good (not goodness, but Good as a supreme spiritual principle): «"Goodness" here is taken in its ancient, general meaning, designating beauty rather than moral perfection, and philokalia means "love of beauty"»

<sup>2</sup> N. O. Losskii, *The World as an Actualization of Beauty: The Basics of Esthetics*, (Progress – Traditsiya, Moscow, 1998), p. 256 [in Russian].

<sup>3</sup> V. N. Samokhvalov, «The Antientropic Meaning of Beauty», *Doctoral Dissertation in Philosophy* (Moscow, 1990), pp. 7, 8 [in Russian].

... Asceticism creates not a "good" but a wonderful human being, and the distinctive feature of holy hermits is not at all their "goodness", which carnal and even very sinful people also possess, but spiritual beauty, the glaring beauty of an illustrious and luciferous person, which is totally unattainable for a overweight and carnal person».<sup>4</sup>

We can briefly show how the category of good can reveal its specifics within the framework of environmental culture. Much has already been done in this respect. The wonderful works of A. Leopold, T. Regan, and D. Foreman became classical for the development of environmental ethics.

Schweitzer formulated several basic axioms in this sphere. His definition of a human being who shares the thesis of life awe wonderfully matches the above thought of Florenskii. Schweitzer wrote about a human being who might be considered truly environmentally cultured: «Everything that happens to this life, he will perceive as if it has happened to him; he will render it the biggest help he can; and, if he manages to do something for the preservation and maintenance of life, it will be his greatest happiness that fell to his lot».<sup>5</sup> In addition, we can recall a wonderful legacy of oriental thought, for example, Buddhist and other traditions of sympathy to the living. Russian Orthodox culture has a powerful category of collegiality, when the whole world is seen as a single convocation, all parts of which are extending synergically to God, and its absolute attributes are Truth, Beauty, and Love.

Of special attention are the thoughts of P.A. Kropotkin about the periods of true verdure in the arts and science that essentially coincide with periods when the ideas of cooperation within the human community and between humans and the environment come to the fore<sup>6</sup>.

Another facet of the value of Good concerns the sphere of human economic activity, which at present has declared war on Nature. Here Russian thinkers have undertaken colossal work. S.N. Bulgakov thought that the world should be transformed by man into an art; Florenskii asserted that the economy is «...the totality of our spiritual symbols».<sup>7</sup> Let us cite the thoughts of the economic geographer P.N. Savitskii, leader of the

«Eurasians», a scientific and philosophical trend, which originated within the Russian immigration in the 1930s. He viewed the truly humane and truly reverend-before-life human economic activity as the continuation of centuries-long genetic links «...between the plant, animal, and mineral kingdoms, on the one hand, and the human being, its everyday life, and even spiritual world, on the other».<sup>8</sup> As a result of such an attitude to land – Nature – «...by the end of the production cycle, the owner aspires to leave it in a state not worse but, possibly, better than that in which it entered the production cycle».<sup>9</sup>

Generalizing, we may say again, that, so far, isolated studies in various fields are gradually approaching conclusions about the objective character of supreme values, and the noospheric paradigm is opening one of possible ways of clarifying the ontological-axiological foundation of environmental culture.

On this basis, we may define antienvironmental culture as the destruction of natural complexes and turning natural landscapes into urbanized conglomerations; environmental culture of livelihood (low-cased), which includes the usual rules of human behavior: rational economic management, new nature-saving technologies, etc.; and, finally, environmental Culture as the spiritual-intellectual and noospheric basis of environmental worldview.

<sup>4</sup> P.A. Florenskii, *A Pillar and the Assertion of Truth*, Vol. 1, book 1 (Pravda, Moscow, 1990), p. 99 [in Russian].

<sup>5</sup> A. Schweitzer, *Aus Meinem Leben und Denken* (Felix Meiner Verlag, Leipzig, 1931).

<sup>6</sup> P.A. Kropotkin, *Mutual Assistance among Animals and Humans as an Engine for Progress* (Znanie, St. Petersburg, 1997) [in Russian].

<sup>7</sup> P.A. Florenskii, *Works in 4 vols.*, Vol. 3(1) (Mysl', Moscow, 2000), p.435 [in Russian].

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<sup>8</sup> P.N. Savitskii, *The Continent Eurasia* (Moscow, 1997), p.282 [in Russian].

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p.222

## THE PROBLEMS OF ENVIRONMENTAL CULTURE FORMATION IN RUSSIA

Recently, scientists, politicians, and public figures focus more often on the fact that one of the compulsory conditions for human survival on the planet Earth is the solution to the problem of forming environmental culture in different strata of the population. Environmental aspects of culture should «permeate» each member of the community and become our internal conviction, worldview, and ideology. So, what are the ways of achieving all these?

Obviously, no sum of knowledge in itself can automatically become internal convictions. A series of questions and answers, which occur during our exchange of opinions in a dialogue, helps form convictions. It is dialogue that becomes one of the main forms of environmental enlightenment. This conclusion was drawn by the participants in the scientific-practical section Environmental Culture as a Condition for Harmonious Social Development, which was held June 29, 2006, in Moscow, within the framework of the XII International Conference «The Sustainable World: Towards Environmentally Secure Civil Society», organized by the Subcommittee on Issues of Environmental Culture of the Commission on Environmental Security and Protection of the Russian Public Chamber.

Dialogue as an optimal form of interrelations in a democratic community will ensure the formation of environmental culture, based on personal convictions, assessed and accepted by human reason. In such conditions, environmental culture will not be a dogma, which can be forgotten or replaced by another one tomorrow.

Dialogue is necessary for another reason. We all exist in an information-congested space. Each one of us can quite easily get information about practically any issue from a diversity of sources. But, if a person is unprepared to perceive this or that knowledge, the consequences may be absolutely unpredictable. Only real contacts – a dialogue – allows us get a feedback and provide explanations. No doubt, mass media also play a most important role here with their public answers to the most urgent questions.

Another very important polemic, which was very popular lately, is questions related to compulsory environmental education at school. Many representatives of the educational and cultural community think that the introduction of an environmental course as a separate subject into the curricula is a key way of forming environmental culture.

Yet, do we form various moral qualities through content areas? If so, then why did no such proposals emerge to form chemical or biological culture as a result of studying these subjects at school?

Here is another point. By the results of the study of any subject, we can always single out gifted children in this particular knowledge area, as well as poor students and even those who cannot master this subject. Thus, there is always only a small part of learners who can freely use received knowledge and display it at school conferences or olympiads.

**Dialogue as an optimal form of interrelations in a democratic community will ensure the formation of environmental culture, based on personal convictions, assessed and accepted by human reason. In such conditions, environmental culture will not be a dogma, which can be forgotten or replaced by another one tomorrow.**

In this case, we prepare elite, similar to persons who play big tennis. In case of forming environmental culture, we expect not single but mass positive results, which have never been observed during the mastering of content areas. Of course, here we speak about fostering moral basics in teenagers.

The process of upbringing and, especially, re-upbringing of grownups is inefficient. The process of forming environmental culture should primarily be addressed to the young generation. The most resultant is work that takes into account a broad spectrum of children of different age categories: from preschoolers to teenagers. Such work has been conducted for many years in the form of additional education and upbringing, suggesting various forms of interaction with children and taking into account their individual abilities and human qualities.

A special way of forming environmental culture may also be suggested for such socially unprotected children who study in correctional schools, for invalids and orphans, as well as for children who live in closed establishments. Participation in different environmental activities for such children plays the role of a social adapter; they understand that they can, «like all», contribute to the course of preservation of the environment and even be top students in certain issues.

The formation of environmental culture is inseparable from national traditions, and here it is very important to take into account the instructional framework and personnel available in the region. All this favors the situation in which the constituent members of the Russian Federation decide themselves which way of forming environmental culture is the most optimal for them. Here are two very graphic examples. The Republic of Mordovia has developed its own textbooks and carries out continuous environmental education from daycare centers to the grownup population. The city of Khanty-Mansiisk holds annually environmental months, in which all inhabitants of the region take part. Mass events are conducted at educational establishments, industrial enterprises, living quarters, parks, and squares. This is a truly nationwide formation of environmental culture.

Besides additional education, the process of environmental culture formation may organically fill the vacuum that happened in the character building work of every form master from the time when reforms in the country started.

Several years ago, each form master had a variety of topics for out-of-class events with his/her students. It seemed that negative phenomena and processes would always provoke disapproval and positive ones, admiration. Today we understand that

what was once practically everyone's example may be publicly disapproved tomorrow. Question: which values will not be lost by civilization with time? What actions and thoughts will teachers not be ashamed of many years after? No doubt, such values and actions may include everything that is related to the preservation of and careful attitude to nature. Depending on age and interestedness, a form master may offer his/her students to take part in contests and actions, roundtables and conferences, cruises and excursions related to nature, the environment, and healthy lifestyle.

Any idea can be supported if we can attract close attention to it. Recently, the central television prepared a cycle of different shows that attract the spectators' attention to sports, arts, and healthy lifestyle. And skating, ball dances, boxing, mountaineering, and hanging on a trapeze under the big top are already becoming fashionable. It turns out that we can if we want to captivate people with something on a mass scale. We can make interesting and informative programs about animals. But such work must be conducted systemically and cover all facets of the most important problems of the formation of human personality, including environmental culture; only then we may count on any material results.

A pleasant fact is that a number of federal ministries and departments support real undertakings aimed toward the formation of environmental culture. Alongside the Federal Forestry Agency, no matter how strange this may seem, we can mention the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Federal Nuclear Energy Agency.

But, to our deep regret, the Ministry of Education and Science does not pay proper interest to the issues of fostering and forming environmental worldview in school students, although in all respects, this issue is primarily within its competence.

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## THE FORMATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CULTURE IN STUDENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ECOLOGIZATION OF SOCIETY

The characteristic feature of societal development in the past decades has been the orientation toward technogenic progress, which leads to numerous global crises in different spheres of human activity, including an environmental crisis.

What is environmental culture? It is environmental knowledge and skills, environmental thinking, value orientations, and environmentally justified behavior. Environmental thinking implies the ability to forecast the consequences of human impacts on nature and the desire to protect the human habitat.

Unfortunately, public conscience has certain environmental stereotypes, which hinder the development of environmental culture in the population. Among these biases we should mention the inexhaustibility of natural resources; the overestimation of nature's ability for self-recovery and human abilities for influencing environmental phenomena, because, as a rule, people do not understand the depth of their incompetence; the indifference to the state of the natural environment and the fate of future generations; orientation toward false goals and priorities in interaction between society and nature; legal nihilism and disrespect for law; and underestimation of the social danger of environmental crimes<sup>1</sup>.

Educational and cultural institutions are largely contributing to the solution of problems of environmental upbringing and education at the institutional level. It is them that work directly in the sphere of environmental education, upbringing, and enlightenment of the population.

If we take recent changes in the environmental situation as a criterion of the efficiency of environmental education, then we have to state the inconsistency of efforts aimed toward nature protection by educational methods. We can hardly consider satisfactory the state of environmental education itself, since we have few quality textbooks and qualified teachers. Usually, the main causes of this situation are unsatisfactory financing and insufficient attention on behalf of the state in general. Obviously, in a modern state, it is impossible to ensure an acceptable level of environmental security by law enforcement bodies alone. One way or another, the entire state policy, including cultural policy, should be involved in solving this problem and coordinating the efforts of all institutions for human socialization and enculturation.

The main instrument capable of contributing to the formation of environmental thinking is the system of education, whose role is exclusive in this process. The Moscow State University of Culture and Arts has initiated the introduction of the classroom discipline «Environmental Management» into the register of disciplines of the State Standard of the Instructional Board under the State University of Management. At present, the state standards are being revised, and new-generation standards are being developed. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a concept of the model of the new discipline «Social Ecology».

<sup>1</sup> E. N. Zhevlakov, Environmental Crimes (Criminal-Law and Criminological Aspects) (Moscow, 2002), pp. 195, 196 [in Russian].

**The solution of modern environmental problems, preservation of natural equilibrium, and sustainable development of society are impossible today without the formation of environmental culture and enlightenment of society. An important role in this sphere must be played by higher educational establishments and, primarily, those of culture and arts.**

In 2003, Russia signed a document on sustainable development of society, the main requirement of which is the ecologization of all technologies. It is suggested to introduce the course «Concepts of Sustainable Development» into the curricula of higher educational institutions, and the course must reflect environmental standards that help develop environmental conscience already in the students of higher education, i.e., at an early stage of personal professionalization.

The university disciplines «Valeology and Ecology», «Environmental Culture», and «Social Ecology» contribute to the formation of environmental thinking. A number of disciplines in managerial specialties analyze the problems of environmental management, environmental audit of organizations, and environmental examination of projects.

A special role in organizing the environmental upbringing of students belongs to the Department of Valeology and Life Safety. It is, in fact, a center for the development and implementation of the concept of environmental upbringing of the university students. The structure of the curricula, introduction of environmental programs, and organization of environmental actions are the forms of the department's work. Its efforts are supported by the student councils of the faculties, the university student council, and the student rectorate. This is the wholesome structure of the environmental upbringing system at the university.

The university's Around the World training tourist center forms environmental culture in students through tourist activities.

The ecologization of social conscience should not be carried out spontaneously and at the intuitive level. It requires a system and basic research. A number of dissertations on this topic have been defended at the university's dissertation councils.

Science views environmental problems not only as interrelation between the human being and nature but also as the concept of cultural ecology, suggested by D.S. Likhachev. Here we speak about the preservation of cultural heritage, care for historical and cultural monuments, and area studies. This is a separate field of the university's work, related to its historiography. All this and milestones of environmental upbringing.

The priority area of the university's work is training specialists in the specialties «Folk Artistic Culture» and «Museum Activities and Protection of Monuments». The university takes part in the contest of innovative educational programs within the framework of the National Project Education. The main goal of the project The Innovative System of Preserving and Developing Russia's Traditional Folk Culture is the formation of the innovative educational system for the universities of culture and arts, which efficiently provides specialists for solving urgent problems of the

current state educational and cultural policy for the preservation and development of Russia's traditional folk culture and the preservation of the unique specialty «Folk Artistic Creativity» and the course «Folk Artistic Culture», created by the higher educational establishments of culture and arts.

A trend in forming environmental culture in students is the activation of thinking, emotional reevaluation of one's own attitude to nature, and the analysis of relations between the human being and nature. Literally, the ground for this process is the university's territory. Twenty-two hectares of parks, the zone of the Moscow canal, and an oak grove are the basis of the university's environmental campaign, which has been conducted for the decades of its existence. Territory cleaning (the environmental action «For Clean Moscow Suburbs») and vegetation planting are organized by the university not only for the students but primarily for all inhabitants of the Left-bank microdistrict.

To improve the environmental culture of Russian society, it is necessary to create a system of general, complex, and continuous environmental education and upbringing, which would cover the whole process of preschool and school upbringing and education, the professional training of specialists at secondary and higher vocational schools, as well as at retraining institutions.

Environmental training at higher educational institutions should be based on environmentally oriented teaching, and more attention should be paid to environmental upbringing and enlightenment. Very important are such disciplines as philosophy, culturology, ethics, sociology, pedagogy, ethnography, and others that directly influence the development of the young generation's worldview. Environmentally oriented teaching at technical institutions of higher education should include basic disciplines: physics, chemistry, biology, and geography; it is necessary to introduce disciplines on ecology and environmental protection.

For law students, it is necessary to increase the teaching load of the legal framework of environmentalism. It is necessary to publish a number of textbooks, methodological manuals, books, and video aids on environmentalism. In the regions, it is necessary to publish textbooks and manuals of environmental content for disciplines that are taught within the regional component.

Our future depends of the successful achievement of the main goals of environmental education.

**N.V. Krotova**

Rector of the Moscow State University of Culture and Arts

## **TOURISM IS A «GOLD RESERVE» FOR RUSSIA'S ESPECIALLY PROTECTED NATURAL TERRITORIES**

### **Management means thinking!**

The key factor of the project's success was the establishment of efficient program management coordination councils, which unite the representatives of local administrations, reserves, tourist companies, NPOs, and educational and cultural institutions. The leaders of the coordination councils have had internships at Australian national parks. Participants in the coordination councils have conducted a socioeconomic analysis in the regions. The findings formed the basis for regional programs to develop tourism and the sustainable life of people, using the EPNT potential. The programs were officially approved by municipalities, and... the process started.

Gennadii Smirnov, first deputy head of the administration of Kilemary district, the Republic of Mari El: «We were long excited about the idea to develop tourism in the district. It is a subsidized district, and we generate only one-tenth of our incomes. According to the new legislation, we must transfer to economic independence. Agriculture is unprofitable. The basis of the district's economy is the woodwork and timber industry. Yet forest resources are not endless.

At present, the development of tourism is a key priority of the district administration. At the first stage, the main point is to set friendly relations with people and organizations who will work as our partners. And we started this process. When the reserve Bol'shaya Kokshaga addressed us with its plans to develop a biosphere reserve, we found it very interesting. And we sent the chief specialist in environmentalism to a workshop at the Environmental Center Zapovedniki, where he was trained, and then we started to work together. We are grateful to the Environmental Center and the TACIS program, which showed interest in us. It is very important for us that we understand one another, and it is pleasant to work together».

Olga Myznikova, head of the Kabanskii district administration's tourism department, Republic of Buryatia: «The project improved awareness at all levels – officials, population, deputies. We were able to approach the officials: for the first time in years the district and republican budgets allocated one million rubles each for a tourism development program. We will implement it together with the reserve».

Galina V. Maslyakova, director of the Matour tourist company, Yoshkar-Ola: «Thanks to this project, an initiative tourism development group was set up in the republic, which included businesspeople interested in creating a tourist infrastructure and tourist companies. And we already have intermediates to be introduced into the republican tourism development program, and we are calling other districts to forward their proposals for this program».

In each district, the Environmental Center Zapovedniki jointly with EUROPARC conducted trainings on how to develop tourism and environmentally friendly and tourism-related businesses, how to create guest houses and souvenir shops, and how to produce and process environmentally clean foods with the EPNT logotype. And, as the basis for the development of this environmental business, the training Microcrediting (including the Business Plan Development section) was conducted, and two preferential loan funds for these business projects were established.

**The preservation of valuable natural complexes, as well as objects of historical and cultural heritage, located on especially protected natural territories (EPNTs), largely depends on the socioeconomic situation in the regions and in the country as a whole. Unemployment and low income levels among local populations provoke violations of nature management standards and oppose the interests of people to protected natural territories.**

**Russia's protected natural territories have a unique natural, historical, and cultural potential, which must serve the benefit of local inhabitants, primarily, through the development of tourism.**

**Obtaining real profits from the existence of a particular EPNT, the local population becomes the followers and protectors of this territory. Only a year and a half ago, the state natural reserves Baikalskii and Bol'shaya Kokshaga in cooperation with the Environmental Center Zapovedniki (Reserves) and the EUROPARC Federation initiated the introduction of socioeconomic programs to develop tourism and improve the living standards of local populations.**

**The project was supported by the European Commission within the implementation of the TACIS/IBPP program. Already now we see positive changes in the socioeconomic situation and people's attitudes.**

### **A Million for the Future**

The establishment of these funds is the most important achievement of the project.

In Kilemary district of the Republic of Mari El (the territory of the planned biosphere reserve Kugu-Kakshan), the local administration played the key role: it signed a contract with the credit organization Mari Credit and, instead of the planned 130 000 rubles, allocated more than one million rubles to the fund! In addition, the administration is ready to cover part of the loan interest rates for projects targeted toward the development of sustainable tourism and agriculture from the district budget. At present, four applications from local inhabitants were approved for preferential loans. People that take loans at this organization are very happy with both the absence of bureaucratism and the loan conditions. Sergei Baranov, a local entrepreneur: «I will take a loan for the construction of a guest house next year. I will build it in one season. First, I will see how it will work and what income it will yield. If everything goes well, I will build more guest houses». S.S. Kuznetsova, the owner of the first guest house: «I like this place very much. It is good for rest. We bought out several houses, and we will remodel them into guest houses. We took a loan. We own a farm, so we will provide tourists with food as well. We will install Russian ovens. You see, both I and my family just like this business».

Kabanskii district of the Republic of Buryatia took another road. The Kabanskii district administration made a decision to allocate 100 000 rubles from its budget to set up a microcredit fund for the population of the settlement Vydrinskoe. The Environmental Center Zapovedniki, on its part, invested 27 000 rubles into the fund as a charitable contribution. The interest rate on loans is only 12%. The establishment of the microcredit fund was a catalyst for the development and adoption by the Kabanskii district administration of a program to support a small-business development program, worth of 2.5 million rubles. Funds were allocated to cover the interest rates on loans taken by local inhabitants for business development.

This is what Lidiya Khlebnikova, director of the crafts house in the settlement Arda, said about the most important result of this project, «The main point is that people obtained hope that everything will change for the better. People started to get interest in handicraft, traditional crafts, and services for tourists. Tourist firms learned about us, and we received a valuable experience of working with them and realized that what we do is of great interest for others».

### **You Learned It, Help Your Colleagues!**

We are sure that the project should be disseminated in other regions of Russia. At present, the whole world acknowledges the interrelation between the preservation of biological diversity and the needs for the development of local communities as a key factor in managing protected natural territories (Seville Strategy,

1995). M.G. Safin, director of the reserve Bol'shaya Kokshaga, «The sign of a territory's international acknowledgment has always played an important role in the development of tourism. Today we are speaking about assigning this territory the status of a UNESCO biosphere reserve. What is the biosphere reserve Kugu-Kakshan? It is, primarily, the core – the reserve Bol'shaya Kokshaga, its buffer zone, and its cooperation zone, which includes two districts. We are speaking about the development of tourism, the revival of folk crafts, folklore, and museums right on the cooperation territory. UNESCO assigns the status of a biosphere reserve, primarily, because the local inhabitants have realized the value of natural and cultural assets in order to develop this territory and improve the local living standards. Of course, research will be conducted on the biosphere reserve's territory. We are looking for a compromise between humans and nature. Nature management must be environmental in order to preserve nature for the local inhabitants themselves».

The state strategy for the development of the EPNT federal system pays special attention to the introduction of integration mechanisms that ensure the mutual usefulness of EPNTs and local communities and the development of sustainable tourism and environmentally friendly EPNT-based businesses.

Vasilii Sutula, director of the reserve Baikal'skii: «The main result of this project is dialogue and cooperation with various interested organizations. This yields a good effect on the development of tourism and on involving people in positive work. The members of the coordination council – heads of village administrations – are key people in the work with the local population, and it would be exceptionally important to win them to the course of the reserve. This is what happened owing to joint work. This activity agrees with the biosphere status of the reserve and serves a good example of implementing the Seville Strategy on our territory».

The Environmental Center Zapovedniki has tested a new technology of uniting various forces for solving the problems of protected territories; the center is able to transfer it and is open for cooperation with all EPNTs, authorities, and businesses in the development and implementation of similar programs.

**S.Yu. Belova**  
Environmental Center Zapovedniki

**A.R. Grigoryan**  
Wild Nature Protection Center

## LIBRARIES AS CENTERS OF ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION AND CULTURE IN THE REGIONS OF RUSSIA

The execution of the constitutional rights in the Russian Federation for a favorable environment, authentic information about its condition, and damages incurred on human health or property by environmental crimes (art. 42 of the Russian Constitution) and of the constitutional obligations to preserve nature and the environment and to care for natural riches (art. 58 of the Russian Constitution) requires high environmental culture from each citizen and Russian society as a whole. Environmental culture is formed continuously and purposefully during human life and activity through a system of continuous environmental upbringing, education, and enlightenment. Libraries play an important role in this process.

The upbringing of environmental culture in the population by libraries is based on a solid legal framework, which comprises, first, the Constitution of the Russian Federation and the Federal Law On Environmental Protection (2002), as well as a number of other regulatory acts, adopted at the federal and regional levels and indirectly related to the activity of libraries. Article 74 of chapter XIII of the Federal Law On Environmental Protection says that libraries are among the institutions and organizations that take part in environmental enlightenment and inform the population about environmental and environmental-security laws. More than ten of the Russian constituent members have adopted regional laws on environmental education, enlightenment, and culture. These laws envisage the participation of libraries in environmental enlightenment and the formation of environmental culture in the population.

The majority of Russian libraries, regardless of their departmental subordination, pursue the environmental enlightenment of people purposefully and successfully. The fact that libraries are mentioned by the 2002 Federal Law On Environmental Protection means that libraries are acknowledged as agents of environmental enlightenment. And this is largely related to the results of the All-Russian Library Review Competition on Environmental Enlightenment of the Population, which started in 1995. Three federal ministries, the Ministry of Environmental Protection (Natural Resources), the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Education and Science, promoted this review competition for seven years.

Over the four stages of the All-Russian Library Review Competition on Environmental Enlightenment of the Population from 1995 through 2006, the libraries, along with mass media and public organizations, showed themselves as fully legitimate partners and helpers of primarily governmental nature-protection bodies in informing the population about environmental problems, environmental security, and environmental protection.

In the Russian regions, the work of libraries in environmental enlightenment of the population found understanding and support in the administrations, nature-protection authorities, environmental foundations, educational establishments, administrations of culture,

**The network of Russian libraries is turning into an original environmental-enlightenment library system, which plays a noticeable role in the formation of environmental culture in the Russian population.**

and public organizations. The army of many thousands of professional librarians stands behind the libraries, working with millions of library users and providing environmental knowledge not only for young students but also for adults who make decisions at the governmental, municipal, industrial, and household levels.

The environmental enlightenment activities of libraries are based on the stocks of documents that cover environmental aspects. Nature-protection structures, environmental foundations, and public organizations, having acknowledged libraries as their partners and helpers, assist them in forming these stocks, providing them with relevant literature (regional Red Books, state reports on the environmental condition and protection, etc.), sorting out subscriptions to environmental periodicals, and financing mass library events on environmental problems.

The All-Russia review competition has shown that libraries continue to build up their potential for environmental enlightenment, actively participate in the formation of ecological consciousness and the upbringing of environmental culture practically in all the regions of Russia. The libraries of only seven federal constituents have not taken part in four All-Russian review competitions since 1995. The libraries of almost 40 federal constituents took part in all the four review competitions. From 8000 to 10000 libraries participated in each All-Russian review competition.

At the regional and municipal levels, we see an active process of forming central (mainly, scientific and public) libraries as methodological centers of environmental enlightenment for the whole library network of their regions. Other libraries are creating centers of environmental information and culture, which allows them to improve their environmental enlightenment, making it more purposeful, systemic, and integrated.

The informational and methodological materials of the libraries that participated in the review competition, such as programs of library work, regulations on environmental centers, methodological developments of library specialists, electronic databases, and many other things, are widely used in the practical work of libraries in environmental enlightenment in the regions of Russia. Libraries work a lot with schoolchildren and young people, teaching them to love nature and to feel responsible for its preservation and helping them to enrich their environmental knowledge and find ways of applying it to practice by engaging them in environmental actions.

Libraries are accumulating experience, employing their unique opportunities: data bases on paper

and electronic media, the ramified net of libraries, and qualified specialists with higher education. In addition, the work of libraries is very democratic: a free information access, exposure to different points of view on environmental problems, free exchange of experiences and methodological developments, engagement of government officials and public organizations, and joint environmental and conservation events.

The All-Russia Library Research and Instructional Center for Environmental Culture (VTsEK), established by the decision of the board of the Russian Ministry of Culture at the Russian State Library for the Young (RGYuB), has started its development since 2002. The center is authorized to create an environmental-enlightenment system of libraries in Russia in order to form environmental culture in the citizens, analyze, generalize, and disseminate innovative library practices in environmental enlightenment and methodological assistance.

In its work, VTsEK is supported by the State Duma's Environmental Committee, the Federal Agency for Culture and Cinematography, the Center for Russia's Environmental Policy, the Public Chamber's Commission on Environmental Security and Protection, and many other governmental and public entities. Without cooperation with educational and scientific establishments and public organizations, it would be more difficult for libraries to attain high professionalism in environmental enlightenment, nature protection and management, and environmental security.

Thanks to VTsEK's close and creative cooperation with the Russian Committee of UNESCO's «Information for All» program, the center has its own web site, Ecoculture ([www.eco.ifap.ru](http://www.eco.ifap.ru)), which contains information about both the center and the work of Russian libraries and other organizations and structures in the field of environmental culture, enlightenment, and education.

Taking into account the importance and necessity of training librarians for environmental enlightenment, VTsEK together with the leading specialists in librarianship and environmentalists has developed and has been implementing for nearly ten years in the country's library network a retraining system for librarians in the problems of environmental enlightenment. For many years, VTsEK has been conducting consultancies and internships for librarians, which now have grown into specialized retraining courses for librarians. These training workshops under the program «Library as the Center of Environmental Information and Culture» went beyond the boundaries of Russia in 2005 to the level of an interstate training workshop «Environmental Enlightenment

for Sustainable Development». Practically, the retraining program has been implemented in recent years through the Retraining Academy for the Workers of Culture, Arts, and Tourism (APRIKT). In 2006, a professional retraining program for librarians «Libraries and Information: Management in the Field of Environmental Information and Culture» (a second higher education) was launched.

Many Russian libraries have acquired innovative experience in providing services to the people, which is realized through modern forms of library activities, such as «Civil Forum», «Environmental Marathon», «Environmental Auction», «Informational Environmental Conference», etc. Libraries are acquiring the experience of implementing socially significant programs aimed toward improving the life of local communities and are taking an active part not only in their development but also in their practical implementation. These are «Environmental Resonance», a program of the Bryansk library network; «Sustainable Development Is Future Planning», a civil forum at the Central TsBS Library of Karagaisk district, Perm oblast; «Life Is in the Hands of the Living», a program of the Miass Central City Library, Chelyabinsk oblast; and many others. Such library programs and projects help the regional administrations see and take into account the interests of the local populations, when making environmental decisions, and improve the living standards. Libraries in many regions are becoming the initiators and organizers of practical environmental actions, uniting the populations for solving environmental problems, making improvements, rehabilitating the environment, and providing sustainable socioeconomic development for the regions. Librarians have left the walls of their libraries, becoming active participants in practical events and providing people with the necessary information and methodologies.

The informational and environmental-enlightenment potential of the libraries is immense, but it is not used effectively everywhere by both the librarians and government and public organizations interested in the formation of environmental culture.

Libraries in their work use the latest technologies; even the rank-and-file rural libraries look for and find opportunities to work in the Internet; libraries themselves create electronic informational and methodological materials, which they later provide for their individual and collective users. For example, the Kursk Oblast Library for Children and Youth has created, under the financial support of the oblast environmental foundation and together with the workers of the Central Blackland State Natural Reserve named after V.V. Alekhin and other organizations, an electronic informational-

educational resource, CD-R The Red Book of the Kursk Oblast, adapted for a wide range of users. The State Library for the Young and the Kabansk Central District Library in the Republic of Buryatia, together with public organizations, have created electronic informational resources about the preservation of Lake Baikal, a unique place on the planet: CD-R Buryatia, a Republic in Transbaikalia: A Dialogue of Cultures, the electronic collection The Baikal Ecological Library, etc.

In order to improve the efficiency of library work on environmental enlightenment, we need real support of the heads of the libraries themselves, the organizations where they are located, and federal and municipal authorities.

Therefore, it is necessary to include library projects and programs of environmental culture formation into the federal programs «The Environment and Russia's Natural Resources», «Russia's Culture», «Russia's Education», and regional plans and programs of socioeconomic development and revitalization of territories; to provide target financing for library initiatives and projects on environmental enlightenment; to publish good books and magazines on environmental problems; and to create conditions for the libraries to receive or purchase them.

This will allow libraries to participate fully in providing the Russian citizens with their environmental rights according to the country's main law – the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

**N.F. Tsertsek**

Заместитель руководителя ВЦЭК на базе Российской государственной юношеской библиотеки



**Bulletin «Towards a Sustainable Russia»**

**Bulletin was prepared jointly with Commission on Environmental Security and Nature Protection of RF Public Chamber**

**N° 38, 2007**

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**Design**

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**Pre-press**

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Published 300 copies

Supported by  
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation,  
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)

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ISSN 1726-4014