

★ ANSIPRA BULLETIN ★

Arctic Network for the Support of the Indigenous Peoples of the Russian Arctic (ANSIPRA)
Сеть Арктических Организаций в Поддержку Коренных Народов Российского Севера

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ANSIPRA (formerly NNSIPRA) Bulletin is an information publication of the "Arctic Network for the Support of the Indigenous Peoples of the Russian Arctic". The Bulletin is issued twice a year. Additional issues are produced as new information warrants it. The Bulletin is edited in English and Russian. ANSIPRA Bulletin is distributed to all registered network participants, as well as relevant state agencies and funding institutions. Distribution is free. All written contributions are appreciated.

ANSIPRA Bulletin is politically independent. A special part of the English language edition, however, presents translations of articles of the newsletter "Мир коренных народов" (Indigenous Peoples' World), the official periodical of RAIPON (Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North), selected by RAIPON.

ANSIPRA (formerly NNSIPRA) is a communication network linking Russian Indigenous Peoples' Organisations (IPOs) with international institutions and organisations alarmed about the future of the indigenous peoples of the Russian North. ANSIPRA's main goal is to spread information, to mediate contacts, and to assist in project coordination and application for funding.

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Information from the Secretariat

Internet web-sites

ANSIPRA has finally received its own Internet web-site: <<http://www.raipon.net/ansipra>>. It is still under construction, and the Russian language section is not yet there. The site – when ready – will contain the contents of the hitherto published bulletins – as far as these are still of interest – but will in future also contain other information, updated tables, etc. Be aware that the web-site does not contain the individual bulletins as such; rather, the contained contributions are sorted according to topics.

The ANSIPRA web-site is technically placed under the URL of RAIPON. This does not change the fact that its contents are politically independent.

ANSIPRA is grateful to the executive agency of the Saami/Nordic Support Programme for the indigenous peoples of Russia (GRID-Arendal) for financing the webmaster, and to the webmaster, Vlad Peskov (Moscow and St. Petersburg), for his efforts.

We would like to urge the readership of the English language edition to inform us if they could do without receiving paper issues of ANSIPRA Bulletin in the future, because the contents will be available on the internet. This would save us printing and mailing costs.

During the last few months, two regional offices of RAIPON (Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North: <<http://www.raipon.net>>) have also got their web-sites:

- 1: Association of the Nenets People of the Nenetskiy Aut. Okrug: <<http://www.raipon.net/yasavey>>
- 2: Association of Indigenous Peoples of the Khabarovskiy Kray: <<http://www.raipon.net/khab-ilc>>.

«Mir Korennykh Narodov - Zhivaya Arktika»

Four issues of the official periodical of RAIPON were published in 2000. From No. 3 on, ANSIPRA has agreed with RAIPON to edit and publish English translations of selected articles. These are published on the RAIPON web-site (links from the ANSIPRA homepage - Bulletin - Back issues) and printed in an appendix to the English language edition of the ANSIPRA Bulletin. The translations of No. 4 of the periodical are published within in this issue.

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Report from the 2nd Planning Workshop of the Saami/Nordic Programme: "Capacity building and participation of Russia's indigenous peoples in the sustainable development of the Arctic"

Winfried Dallmann, ANSIPRA / Norwegian Polar Institute
Helga Pedersen, GRID-Arendal

The Saami/Nordic Programme was initiated by UNEP/GRID-Arendal in close cooperation with RAIPON¹ and the Saami Council in 1998/99. The main purpose of the programme is to develop the capacity of the regional and central IPOs² of Russia in the fields of communication, information, environmental knowledge and awareness raising³. Issues to be addressed are networking, communication, environmental impact assessments, regional environmental information, legal issues and small business development. The executive agency of the programme is GRID-Arendal, while the advisory board is composed of representatives for the Saami Council (chair), RAIPON, GRID-Arendal, the Barents Region, ANSIPRA and the McArthur Fund/Moscow.

Funding

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs granted a budget of 1 million Norwegian crowns (ca. 120,000 US\$) in the autumn of 1999, which was earmarked for information and network building in 2000. A continuation of funding was made dependent on the success of the first year. The results (see below) of the first year's work led to a renewed funding of the same amount for 2001.

Journal and web-site

With this budget, RAIPON was given the opportunity to establish a quarterly journal in the Russian language ("Mir korennykh narodov – zhivaya arktika"⁴) which fills the vital need of information and public discussion between the federal and regional chapters of the association. Four issues were produced in 2000, and the number of subscriptions has by now reached approximately 1100.

An agreement regarding the publication of English translations of selected articles was signed by RAIPON and ANSIPRA, where draft translations are paid from the above-mentioned budget, while the ANSIPRA Secretariat takes care of the editing and publishing.

The other main achievement of the programme funding is RAIPON's Internet web-site (www.raipon.net), which already provides a lot of information about the organisation and Russian indigenous peo-

ples' issues. Money from the fund was also used to establish the web-sites of two of RAIPON's regional associations: Yasavey of the Nenets A.O., and Khabarovsk. Technical support for the ANSIPRA web-site is also provided through this fund.

The workshop

The second planning workshop was carried out on 29 and 30 January 2001, organised by GRID-Arendal, at Svanhovd Environmental Centre in northern Norway, and was followed by an Advisory Board meeting on 31 January in Kirkenes.

The workshop focussed on, among other things, the coordination of the various international support programmes, namely those of ICC⁵-Canada and Denmark-Greenland⁶. While the ICC-Canada programme has been instrumental in building the institution and structure of RAIPON, and the Danish-Greenlandic Project has contributed to a number of associated issues, it was stated that contributions of the other Nordic countries (Norway, Sweden, Finland) until now have been very modest.

Main topics of the workshop were three of the objectives of the Saami/Nordic Programme which until now not have been started due to the lack of funding: legal issues, small business development and environmental issues. Each of them were introduced by invited speakers from Russia and/or the various other support programmes and subsequently discussed in working groups and in the plenary.

Coordination with other support programmes

It has often been said that there is competition between executive agencies of support programmes in different countries rather than coordination, and also a lacking willingness of donors to fund projects when similar projects already are carried out elsewhere. Although it looks like RAIPON is coordinating available resources in a good way, this is not necessarily a transparent process for the involved agencies, and even less for the funding institutions. It is therefore important to document coordination at the level of project development and description, and to make it clear therein in what way the individual international activities complement each other.

The CIDA⁷-funded ICC-Canadian Programme "INRIPP⁸" has completed its first phase in 2000, and

¹ RAIPON = Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North

² IPOs = Indigenous Peoples' Organisations

³ Earlier reports on intentions and the 1st workshop were presented in NNSIPRA Bulletin No. 2 (April 1999), pp. 8-9, and NNSIPRA Bulletin No. 4 (November 1999), p. 7.

⁴ transl.: Indigenous Peoples' World – Living Arctic

⁵ ICC = Inuit Circumpolar Conference

⁶ See NNSIPRA Bulletin No. 2 (April 1999), pp. 5-13.

⁷ CIDA = Canadian International Development Agency

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has received a total five-year funding of CA\$ 5 mill. – plus CA\$ 1 mill. from other sponsors – (US\$ 3.25 / 0.65 mill.) for the second phase. The first phase consisted of institution-building at RAIPON, in training indigenous people in relevant issues, and providing basic electronic equipment. The two fundamental objectives of phase 2 are: 1) to support the political, economic and cultural development of the indigenous people by establishing a training centre (RITC⁹) managed by RAIPON; and 2) to assist the Russian government in its Northern and Aboriginal Development Programme by strengthening the government's capacity to promote community development and nurture indigenous co-management.

The DEPA¹⁰-funded Danish-Greenlandic activities have undergone structural changes after the conclusion of the "Danish-Greenlandic Project" last year. DEPA is using on the order of 8 million Danish crowns (US\$ 1 mill.) this year for Arctic indigenous peoples' issues. Of this budget, 2.5 mill. crowns finance the Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat, while 3.5 mill. crowns will be used for individual projects. TGK Consult has been granted an additional 1 mill. crowns (from the 2000 budget) for the creation of a project centre under RAIPON coordination as an umbrella for a number of minor support projects in various regions of the Russian North. TGK Consult has also worked out plans for establishing an information centre in Kamchatka¹¹. Furthermore, Denmark is also financing a sacred sites registration project under CAFF¹².

The Barents Euro-Arctic Region (BEAR) has an indigenous peoples' support programme for north-western Russia, which spends an annual amount of approximately 2 mill. Norwegian crowns (210,000 US\$). After having focussed on environmental and health issues in the past, new fields of special attention will be culture, infrastructure and information in the coming years. In contrast to the other programmes, the BEAR activities do not involve coordination by RAIPON.

Several workshop participants expressed their fear that the establishment of coordinating centres around RAIPON might lead to increased administration and to less centralised control. Pavel Sulyandziga, vice-president of RAIPON, did not share these concerns, but stressed the necessity to delegate the increasing amount of work connected with project development and coordination away from the central RAIPON administration. He said this would be possible without losing control as long as the centre leaders are appointed by RAIPON.

Legal issues

Pavel Sulyandziga opened this session by saying that legal matters have the utmost importance. He referred to several current examples of laws being used against the interests of indigenous people¹³, as in the case of Yuriy Ayvaseda, the establishment of indigenous communes, or the degradation of hunting grounds. A highly prioritised issue is to achieve an appropriate indigenous participation when it comes to developing legal norms for the relevant legislation. High priority is also attached to improving common peoples' literacy in legislation.

Olga Yakovleva, of the Indigenous Peoples' Legislative Centre "Rodnik", said in her talk that the main challenge would be to live with the existing laws. There are useful mechanisms that allow them to be used in favour of indigenous interests. The general attitude towards human rights in Russia is positively changing, and there has been noticed an increasing – though small – indigenous participation in legislation development. She said that a major issue is to use the existing legislation to demand a fulfilment of environmental protection requirements in connection with industrial development projects. She also said that Russian legislation allows for the use of local law in the regions, even if these might not be reflected in the federal law. The recently abandoned case against Yuriy Ayvaseda¹⁴ shows that with sufficient legal help indigenous rights can be protected.

Maria Smirnova, representative of the indigenous peoples of the Evenkiyskiy Autonomous Okrug, gave an example from her district, where a law was proposed according to which "formalities concerning indigenous lands should be rearranged", a procedure that might have closed certain game grounds for future indigenous use¹⁵. An appeal from the central office of RAIPON led to the squelching of the proposed law. Other rights violations occur frequently throughout the Russian Federation, for instance by oil companies, although there might be agreements between local land users and the companies. In the case of damage, there are no guarantees. It is highly important that such cases are publicised and followed up by legal expertise.

As to the question of how the Saami/Nordic Programme could contribute to these legal challenges, it is clear that it should try to fill in the gaps of existing activities. Many organisations already work on the issue. A central question that was debated was whether the aim should be to try to exploit the existing legislation for the benefit of the indigenous population, or work for new legislation. Taking into consideration that there are political concerns in connection with government funding for a lobby which could be understood as interfering in Russian internal affairs, this latter option was abandoned.

⁸ INRIPP = Institution Building for Northern Russian Indigenous Peoples' Project

⁹ RITC = Russian Indigenous Training Centre

¹⁰ DEPA = Danish Environmental Protection Agency

¹¹ See article p. 41

¹² CAFF = Arctic Council programme for Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna

¹³ See several articles in this volume and "Mir korennykh narodov" No. 4

¹⁴ See articles p. 11 and p. 34

¹⁵ See article p. 29

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The current Russian legal framework has positive aspects for indigenous rights, but there is a shortage of mechanisms to implement and exploit these. An important task would be to generate a database of the existing legal regime concerning indigenous peoples' rights. Training of local indigenous representatives within the existing legal framework may also be effective. A good tool might be a manual on indigenous rights. Seminars where indigenous peoples representatives and government officials can meet and exchange information are also considered useful. It would be important to find ways to make these efforts sustainable. Furthermore, one should assist federal authorities in improving the normative documents of relevant laws.

There is also a need for juridicial assistance and a need to try cases in court funded through a sort of Legal Aid Fund. An issue of debate is how legal aid can be funded, and whether it should be funded through Russian/local or international sources. Questions such as these have to be answered: Would Russian authorities be willing to fund cases they are likely to lose? Will the international society meddle in internal Russian affairs? Can the legal fund be established as a solidarity fund?

Small business development

The reason for establishing a small business component in the Saami/Nordic Programme was a gap in Scandinavian support for the Saami population concerning this matter. Denmark and Canada already have incorporated small business development in their programmes.

The Canadian project focusses on revenue generating. Oleg Shakov from ICC said that ICC/Canada is prepared to take the leading role in training and establishing necessary infrastructure in the regions. But Canada is not claiming monopoly in this field and ICC are ready to make adjustments to their projects in order to achieve best possible coordination with other players. RITC may be used as an infrastructure for training by other projects. Shakov defined important gaps in their programme, like providing basic electronic equipment for extension workers of their training courses, travel budgets, core funding for full-time employees of the training centre's headquarters, budgets for public relations, advertising and marketing, salaries for the transition period between training and ordinary business, and database development. The programme covers training of only 15-20 trainees per year, and external funding to increase the number would be appreciated.

The Danish approach is more process oriented, from project identification to distribution and sales.

The Nordic/Saami Programme will not compete with other initiatives, but will tend to cooperate and fill in gaps. One way of doing this would be if the Nordic/Saami Programme concentrates on the Kola Peninsula, where cooperation with the Barents programme would be of interest. According to Alf Nys-

tad from the Barents Secretariat, the secretariat is interested in applying the SUF model (Saami Economic Development Fund) on the Kola Peninsula. Through the SUF, grants, loans and – to a certain point – expertise are available to persons who establish themselves in business. The fund covers a wide range of small business initiatives, including such typical Saami livelihoods as reindeer herding, small-scale agriculture and fishing, and traditional handicrafts.

Larisa Ardeyeva (RAIPON regional chapter of Murmansk) reported that only one, Valt Yall, of many indigenous enterprises that were formed on the Kola Peninsula in the early 1990s, has survived. Valt Yall deals with handicraft, souvenirs, and tourist camp activities. They are facing problems with foreign companies that rent native fishing grounds without providing compensation, and their tourist camp was burnt down twice.

Training in market issues and basic business knowledge, legislation, organisation building, etc. is an area where there is a need for more support. Thorsten Bargfrede from ILO said that according to their experience, the role of external projects should not be to train people directly, but to work towards existing organisations, institutions, etc. In this way, training is sustainable after the donors and expertise have left the scene. ILO is not a donor institution, but they have expertise that other projects can use.

Finally it was pointed out that RAIPON has to take a proactive role in coordinating the different initiatives. Norway, Sweden and Finland should put more money into the issue. A donor meeting with participants from these countries should be organised to explore the potential.

Environmental issues

Severe environmental impacts, both past and present ones, have been documented extensively throughout the Russian North. Maria Smirnova (RAIPON, Evenkiyskiy Autonomous Okrug) introduced several current instances from her district that cover the range of oil spills from drilling rigs, planned coal extraction that would disturb reindeer migration routes, and heavy metal pollution affecting vegetation and bird life. Due to the sparse population, without major economic support there is little the local people can do to document violations of environmental law and agreements by the companies.

Vladimir Shirko, head of the successful native hunting enterprise in Bikin (Primorskiy Krai), expressed his concern about new attempts by the company Lespromkhoz to cut timber in the mainly undisturbed Bikin River basin. Earlier attempts were abandoned due to extensive public protests¹⁶. But two recent court decisions have favoured the company. Shirko is afraid that timber cutting in the upper reaches of the basin may lead to the loss of fish; melting of permafrost might even make the entire river disappear,

¹⁶ See NNSIPRA Bulletin No.1, speech by P. Sulyandziga

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which would be the end of the native population in the area.

It gives bad signals for the future that the President of the Russian Federation abolished the State Committee for Environmental Protection last year and transferred environmental issues to the Ministry of Natural Resources¹⁷. In this context, it was also reported that more and more regional administrative units of the Russian Federation are establishing their own environmental protection agencies.

There is still an immense need to document the state of the environment of individual areas, to run environmental impact assessments (including social impacts and indigenous knowledge) prior to industrial impacts, and to detect environmental violations. This has continuously been a high priority for RAIPON.

A: Environmental Impacts Analysis

The University of the Arctic (U-Arctic; now in its establishing phase) has been identified as the best cooperation partner concerning environmental impact studies. One of the main tasks of the U-Arctic is to produce a Human Development Report, which has many similar goals with the Saami/Nordic Programme. It should not be difficult to reestablish U-Arctic's premises for the report in a way that would fully cover the indigenous aspect. Richard Langlais, the U-Arctic's representative, was very positive towards such an approach.

It was suggested that an international working group, composed of indigenous experts from circumpolar areas (Saami, Inuit, Alaskan Natives and a RAIPON representative) should formulate a strategy for addressing the issue through the U-Arctic. The Saami/Nordic Programme could possibly fund the RAIPON participant. This strategy should be launched on 11 June at the ministerial meeting linked to the opening of the U-Arctic in Rovaniemi. RAIPON was asked to endorse the importance of this independently towards the relevant officials.

Svein Tveitdal from GRID-Arendal said that funds and resources for such purposes are in general available, but that one needs to work harder to canalise them to the indigenous people of the Russian Federation.

B: State-of-environment information

To cover the issue of state-of-environment documentation, Pavel Sulyandziga announced a RAIPON programme to establish local environmental information centres in the districts. They already have agreed with Denmark to establish a centre in Kamchatka (see above), and have plans in other regions, for instance, Krasnyy Yar. Such a centre already exists in Khabarovsk.

A current threat to the environment is the transport of nuclear waste. A new Russian law is allowing the import of nuclear waste, although RAIPON and various environmental organisations have carried out protests against this. A main problem is the shortage of information and the lack of feed-back from indigenous communities. It is not only important to be aware of the current situation, but also to get information about planned activities from the state, from companies, etc. A possible approach to this is to collect information from the regions and then link this information to the National Information Agency and the UNEP programmes. Emphasis must be put on the need of a network, with a basis in indigenous knowledge, providing information both to the government and the outside world. Training of local people in the districts is necessary to make such a system work.

The discussion led to a revised goal of the state-of-environment issue for the Saami/Nordic Programme: development of a system for regional information compilation and awareness raising that enables local communities to express and report on the state of their environment and their living standards. This should include regional structures that allow for input to national, circumpolar and global assessments.

¹⁷ See ANSIPRA Bulletin No. 4, pp. 5-6

PROJECT

PROJECT PROPOSAL:

”EVENK LANGUAGE INTENSIVELY”

Revival and preservation of the vanishing Evenk language

Organiser: Association of Evenks of the Neruyngri ulus, Republic of Sakha (Yakutiya), 678933 Icengra village, ul. 50 let Pobedy 1/1, g. Neryugri RS (Yakutiya)

Supporting organisation: Centre for intensive studies of foreign languages, Moscow State University

Project leader: Fenya Matveyevna Lekhanova, member of the board of the Association of Evenks of the Neruyngri ulus, student of Moscow State University, 119899 Moscow, Vorobyovy gory, korpus “B”, room 1249, tel. 2848248, fax (095)2884751; e-mail: iic@rs.msu.ru and iicl@orc.ru.

Region of work: Republic of Sakha (Yakutiya), Moscow, Russia

Time schedule: 10 months (September 2000 – June 2001)

Total cost: USD 8,642.-

BACKGROUND

Among the 30,198 Evenks only 11% speak their own language, mainly persons of old age. The vanishing of the language is caused by the fact that for many decades Evenk children were educated in Russia or Yakutiya. The principle of equality between peoples and languages was neglected. As a result of this, many generations have been brought up without knowledge of their own language and traditions. The national identity degenerated. A people without its language is a people without roots, without intellectual culture. During recent years Evenk schools and day care centres have opened in some regions. But because of the lack of textbooks and competent teachers, there has been no teaching of the Evenk language up until now. In Russia there is a network of universities which give education to teachers of the Evenk language. However, students who come to the universities without speaking the language already do not learn the language even on a basic level. For this reason, a student with a university degree does not start to teach the Evenk language. There are no textbooks for people who want to learn Evenk by themselves.

The problem of revival and preserving the Evenk language is impossible to solve as long as:

There are no original textbooks for colleges, schools and pre-schools which reflect the material and intellectual richness of the people.

There is no teaching of the Evenk language in colleges and schools according to the methodology of teaching foreign languages.

If no adequate measures are taken, there will not be any speakers of Evenk left in Russia twenty years from now.

PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

Revival and preservation of the vanishing Evenk language.

TASKS AND RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

The project will carry out work towards developing a set of educational material, “Evenk language intensively”, consisting of four parts:

- Book for the student
- Exercise book
- Grammar book
- Series of tapes

This package of instructional material can be used for self-studying of the Evenk language. When the project is finalised, there will be arranged a three day’s seminar for the authors of the material about the methodology of the work with textbooks.

MEASURES

A first step in the project will be the establishment of a group of four persons which will include language experts and an illustrator. This group will:

- study theory and practice concerning this the production of language instruction material;
- carry out a fieldwork expedition. The members of the group will travel to places densely inhabited by the Evenks and they will study social, cultural and working habits;
- edit and analyse the collected material;
- select lexical and grammatical material concerning paralinguism, frequency, word formation, communicative and informative values;
- draft a textbook for students, and a companion exercise booklet;
- establish a phonoteque with texts by native speakers;
- illustrate the textbook;
- organise a three-day seminar on the methodology of the work on this textbook series.

EVALUATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

The introduction of the textbook-methodological series “Evenk language intensively” in colleges and pedagogical schools give the students possibilities to learn spoken Evenk. In this way the Evenk schools

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will, in the future, have teachers mastering their own language.

CONTROL OF THE PROGRESS OF THE PROJECT – THE ACCOUNT

The group will discuss every phase of the work which is done.

The leader of the project will, at the end of the project, work out general and financial accounts, which will be handed over to the financing organisations and relevant state authorities.

Information about the organisers:

ASSOCIATION OF THE EVENKS OF THE NERYUNGRI ULUS

The association was founded in 1993. The purpose of the organisation is to defend the rights and legal interests of the Evenk people, to solve their social and economical problems, and to help developing culture and education. With the support of the Association the old Evenk festival “Ikenipke” was reborn (1995), a regional competition-- “The woman – the Protector of the Fireplace” (1996), and a summer language school, “Turen”, has been founded. Members of the board have initiated and have been taking part in the seminars in the republic, in conferences “Ways of renewing and developing the northern schools” (1993) and “Linguistical-methodological problems of teaching Evenk language” (1994). Board members have written a book for teachers (“Teaching Evenk language”) and a textbook for children (“We start to learn Evenk”). The Association has close contact with Evenks from the Republic of Buryatiya and the oblasts of Amur, Chita and Irkutsk. Concerning problems of ecology, the Association co-operates with the ecological movement “Ekoyuris”. An Evenk youth organisation, “Ami”, has been established.

CENTRE FOR INTENSIVE STUDIES OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

The Centre has existed for 25 years. It is headed by Prof. Galina Kitaigorodskaya. The method, which she has developed, “Activation of latent possibilities of the individual and the collective”, is well known in Russia and abroad. According to the method, there have been published and are being published textbooks of a new generation. The method of learning gives practical knowledge of relations between people in different spheres of life, teaches written and oral language, removes psychological barriers and develops creative abilities of the individual, and so on.

Remark: The editorial board of ANSIPRA acknowledges that the information presented here about this project is deficient. A more detailed project description, including a budget (in Russian), can be requested from the ANSIPRA secretariat. We ask all persons who are interested in this project to contact the editorial board or the author of the project, F. Lekhanova.

PROJECT PROPOSAL:

INFORMATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE INDIGENOUS MINORITIES OF THE NORTH WHICH ENGAGE IN TRADITIONAL CRAFTS IN THE MAGADAN OBLAST

„KADAR“: Magadan municipal organisation for environmental protection and the interests of the indigenous small-numbered people of the North and the old-established inhabitants

Postal address: 68601b Ola, Magadan Oblast, Lesnaya ul. 3a, app. 4.; Phone (41341) 2-52-71

Project leader: Chairman of KADAR, Mikhail Terentevich Yashchenko

Area: Ola, Magadan Oblast

Duration: 12 months

Sum applied for: 50,000 US\$

BACKGROUND

Magadan Oblast is one of the main areas with a high concentration of residents belonging to the indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North and other long-established inhabitants.

In the course of privatisation, the interests of the indigenous peoples of the North were unfortunately overlooked. As a result, the peoples find themselves in an extremely difficult state, as it is impossible to

maintain or expand the following traditional subsistence activities: hunting (sea and land); reindeer and domestic animal husbandry; fishing; obtaining, processing and marketing of marine resources; fur farming; collecting and marketing of wild foodstuffs, etc.

Small, indigenous-run enterprises based upon these crafts cannot compete with the national and international companies active in the Magadan Oblast. Native enterprises are handicapped by a lack of

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knowledge regarding management, marketing, taxes, law and other vital information necessary for the successful management of such businesses in an economically competitive environment.

PROJECT GOALS

To raise the educational and informational level of the indigenous and long-established population, to promote business and consequently to raise the number of private firms and thereby to preserve traditional crafts.

PROJECT TASKS

- Establishment of an informational-educational centre providing an information data base, as well as education and consulting services for the indigenous minorities of the North and the long-established population.
- Carrying-out of seminar tours, courses and consulting in indigenous settlements in the Magadan Oblast.
- Publishing of a magazine with complete information about the organisation of small-scale business related to traditional crafts, e.g. production of northern wares and their marketing locally and elsewhere, ware exchange, exchange of experience and traditional household objects, and ecological education leading towards an effective management of land and natural resources.

EXPECTED RESULT

A raised level of knowledge, leading to improved performance, in the sphere of small business and traditional economic activities.

TARGET GROUP

Approximately 500 representatives of indigenous minorities of the North, which want to expand traditional crafts in the Magadan Oblast, will receive educational support in business management.

PROPOSED EXPENDITURES NECESSARY FOR THE REALISATION OF THE PROJECT:

- **Acquisition of technical equipment:** computers, printers, fax, phone, photocopy machine, typewriter, etc. and associated supplies.
- **Acquisition of other equipment:** office furniture for courses and seminars, van for course tours.
- **Trip costs:** air tickets to distant parts of the Magadan Oblast, daily allowances (food, accommodation).
- **Administration and other direct costs:** all expenditures related to administration of the project such as rent of office rooms, municipal and bank services, supplies, postal and publishing costs, etc.
- **Individual financial support:** salaries for long- and short-term staff.

Yuriy Ayvaseda versus LUKoil

compiled by the editors from various sources

An article on the case of Yuriy Ayvaseda is published in "Mir Korennykh Narodov – Arktika Zhivaya" No. 4, 2000, the newsletter of the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North. The English translation of this article can be found on page 34 in the English language version of this volume.
--The Editor

Yuriy Ayvaseda, Nenets reindeer breeder and well-known writer, has recently been the subject of criminal prosecution for his recent efforts to defend the rights of the indigenous people of the Khanty-Mansiyskiy Autonomous Area, Russian Federation.

According to faxed and telephoned communications from Ayvaseda, on 14 September employees of the Western Siberia-LUKoil oil company began to destroy the road connecting the Nenets nomad camps with the village. For some indigenous families, this threatened to cut off their access to medical help, shops, schools and other vital state services and facilities. According to Ayvaseda, the oil concern has tried similar tactics previously. Ayvaseda's attempts to prevent the destruction of the road on 14 September by damaging the wheels of an excavator were being treated by the authorities as a criminal offence.

This was a blatant attempt to besmirch the reputation of an internationally recognised leader of the

Russian indigenous peoples' movement. The case was announced to a wide international audience, and a large number of indigenous peoples' organisations and NGOs protested against the criminal prosecution of Ayvaseda. On 30 November, Ayvaseda's lawyer received a formal note from the local prosecutor that the case against him has been discontinued because his actions are not considered to have comprised any criminal offence.

In spite of this personal victory, the struggle between LUKoil and the reindeer herdsman will continue. The people concerned need all available help to defend themselves against the unlawful, strong-arm tactics of powerful companies; many cases are never brought to court. The Ayvaseda story shows glints of hope for the future, encouraging the native Russian reindeer herders and their international supporters to persevere.

A comment on the situation of the Nenets in Vorkuta

Ivar Bjørklund, Tromsø Museum, University of Tromsø

The comment on the situation of the Nenets population below refers the correspondence published in "Mir Korennykh Narodov – Arktika Zhivaya" No. 3, 2000: "The drama of the Vorkuta Nenets". The English translation of this article can be found on page 52 in the English language version of this volume.
-- The Editor

The "Drama of the Vorkuta Nenets" which is revealed in the following correspondence, is not only a drama, but also a deep tragedy. It is first and foremost a tragedy for the Nenets involved, but also a tragedy for the Russian authorities responsible for the situation. And worse – what is happening to the Nenets reindeer herders in Vorkuta is a condensed version of the plight and suffering taking place today among many of the indigenous people of the Russian North.

The area of Vorkuta has a rather bleak reputation in Russian history. This is where Stalin established the main part of the GULAG-system in the 1930's. With the loss of thousands of lives, prisoners built a railway from the south to the tundra north of the Ural Mountains. At the end of the railway they built prison camps on top of the huge coal fields – the main reason for them being sent there. Coal was the gold of the north and fuelled Stalin's industrialisation campaigns. After the war vast numbers – probably hundreds of thousands – of German prisoners of war toiled the barren grounds and built the city of Vorkuta.

These camps – and the city which followed – also has a place in the Nenets memory. They brought

havoc to the daily life of the nomadic reindeer herders. Escaping prisoners and military patrols were ever-present threats. Stories are told of how prisoners on the run would slaughter all people in a tent to get hold of food and shelter. Or how the military would arrest or kill Nenets as reprisals for helping escaped prisoners. All the time they were running the risk of losing reindeer to the soldiers who always were looking for meat.

The GULAG-system around Vorkuta was the home of up to a hundred thousand people; quite a few were, of course, guards and their families. When the camps were abolished in the 1960's, quite a few of the prisoners settled down in the city together with a growing number of miners recruited from the south. Thus the city grew and became in many ways a showcase for industrial growth and "Russian civilization" in the north. It was an affluent society; the workers were well paid and vacations were spent at resorts by the Black Sea. The citizens had access to all the services of the Soviet State: subsidised shops, theaters and orchestras. And a year of working in the north counted as two in the south. Thus most people became

NENETS

pensioners before the age of fifty, and consequently moved south again to the apartments they received as part of the deal of going north.

Then came "the ages of misery", as most Russian call it today. The dismantling of the Soviet State, the economic disasters and the loss of jobs and social security. The inhabitants of Vorkuta were hit twice as hard; the market for coal was diminishing at the same time. Regular wages became a thing of the past and all savings were nullified through a galloping inflation. To be a pensioner meant starvation and there was no housing available in the south anyway. Airfare skyrocketed together with the cost of living and all this prohibited any dreams of leaving Vorkuta. Thus the city in a way has been turned into a prison camp again, but this time for its own inhabitants.

Such is the social and economic context in which the plight of the Nenets in the area has to be understood. Vorkuta has become the metaphor of Russia - a sinking ship and a miserable one as such. From the Nenets point of view, Vorkuta has been an important source of income. Since all the Nenets in that area are involved in reindeer herding, the selling of reindeer meat to the Russian inhabitants was a secure way of getting money. The nomadic families would regularly visit the suburbs and the mines with their caravans loaded with meat and buy necessities like flour, tea, sugar, bread etc. The closure of many mines and a lack of income among most people, meant that fewer and fewer were able to buy meat.

The closing of the mining town of Khalmer-Yu, which is mentioned in the following correspondence, is a striking example. The mines were not regarded as "profitable" - a completely alien argument for any Russian - and thus closed down in 1994. Consequently all miners and their families had to leave and

the whole infrastructure of the town was abandoned. The Nenets reindeer herders who used to visit the town, suddenly found themselves without any outlet for their meat. They were also deprived of all access to medical care and all civil services they were entitled to as Russian citizens. To complicate the matter further, these people had never been given any kind of education by the Russian authorities and were thus illiterate.

Their efforts to adapt to the changing circumstances when Khalmer-Yu closed were not successful. Some of them started to visit the town of Sovetskaya in order to sell meat, but that meant longer distances and complicated travels. As the reports below reveal, some had lost all their reindeer and tried to find permanent housing in Sovetskaya. But being illiterate and not even in possession of the numerous papers which fuels Russian bureaucracy, they were doomed to lose. The strong ethnocentric sentiments of the Russian ethos came into free play as bureaucrats and politicians turned their back to the suffering Nenets. "We have enough of our own problems without being bothered with those drunken herders", was a common statement from Russians in representative positions.

Deprived of dignity, reindeer and dwelling, many became victims to alcohol and crime. It is a fair statement to say that so far the local authorities have done nothing to help these Nenets out of their dire straits. On the contrary, as seen in the reported case of the kindergarten, many of their actions have actually worsened the situation. It is therefore of the utmost importance that both international and national pressure is placed upon the authorities of the Vorkuta region. As it is today, the prisoners of the GULAG's were better off than the indigenous inhabitants of the very same area.

Tribal communities

The Arctic peoples of the Sakha Republic at the junction of centuries

By the editors of the newspaper "Ilken", Yakutsk

Russian social and economic policy changes at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s went along with a sharp reduction of state support to industrial and agricultural production. The special protectionism concerning the indigenous people of the Russian North has practically been suspended. The history of the world's indigenous peoples indicates that the various indigenous groups of the Russian North will also ultimately reach a common understanding of how to protect their well-being and preserve their identity. Only the establishment of legally recognised Tribal Communities¹⁸ and non-alienation of native lands can prevent complete cultural and economical degradation and guarantee the preservation of traditional ways of life. And these are inseparably connected to primordial lands given by God.

"But things aren't moving..." More than 30 Federal and Republican laws were adopted, more than 1000 legal acts were announced, but none of them were financially backed nor implemented. In 1992 the first president of Russia issued the decree, "About Special Measures for Protection of the Areas of Traditional Residence of the Northern Indigenous Peoples", which emerged as a legal base for development of laws on indigenous peoples in the administrative units of the Russian Federation. Among the peoples of the Russian Federation, ethnic groups living in the Arctic region of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutiya) have a special place. Since ancient times they have occupied vast Arctic lands. They continue to lead a specialised lifestyle based on traditional modes of subsistence and methods of nature management.

The deterioration of the Russian Arctic peoples' living conditions can be attributed to a number of reasons. One is their inability to adapt to severe and rapid changes of conditions. The government's policy of accelerated industrial development of the North has been conducted without taking into consideration the historical and cultural development of northern indigenous peoples, nor their nature management practices.

The first Tribal Communities were organised in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutiya) in the beginning of 1991 on the basis of the "Temporary Guidelines" about Tribal Communities. In 1992 the law of the Sakha Republic, "About Tribal Community of Northern Indigenous Peoples", judicially established the

legal questions of organisation and functioning of a Tribal Community. This law declares that Tribal Communities are formed with the purpose of revival and development of traditional branches of economy (reindeer herding, hunting, fishery), as well as preservation of indigenous peoples' habitat and way of life. These issues became also key factors for the allocation of land funds.

In the Republic of Sakha there are currently 231 Tribal Communities which have received legal recognition. They integrate more than 15,000 members, of whom 2993 people out of the total number work. The communities are responsible for 46,3 million hectares of land, including 30,8 million hectares of reindeer pastures. As of 1 September 2000, Tribal Communities had 44,164 head of reindeer (i.e. 26,6 % of the total number of reindeer in the Republic), 636 head of cattle, 1500 horses, and more than 300 silver foxes and Arctic foxes. It is quite encouraging that the total number of deer in Tribal Communities has increased from 1999 by 4,3 %.

The process of organising Tribal Communities in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutiya) was very difficult and painful for several reasons. First, there were no well-defined projects. Second, the attitude of the officials of different levels was very ambiguous, especially early on in the process. The main reason for this was the fear of losing control of the vast territories. In spite of the remoteness and extreme climate, the extreme zones of the Far North are rich in natural resources and have a strategic value. Third, it was doubted whether the Communities could economically survive under rigid market conditions.

The Tribal Communities are enthusiastically involved in production activity to get out of their difficult social and economic situation. Statistical data demonstrate that in 1999, in comparison with previous years, a considerable decrease of the industrial productivity of Tribal Communities took place. It is connected to the fact that most producers did not have guaranteed customers and faced difficulties in selling their products. Consequently they were compelled to realise production at a very low price. In 1999, 1589 tons of reindeer meat (total weight) were produced by the Communities. The income from the sale of fur skins was 1,484,000 roubles. In addition, 9070 head of wild reindeer were hunted.

During the last years, a number of Tribal Communities began to be engaged in non-traditional kinds of industry, combined with traditional activity (these are the Communities of Gonam, Oron, Omoloy, Tayga, Yukte, Irgichen, Kindigir, and Cheroda). We find quite encouraging the fact that new spheres of Community activities, such as gold mining, timber storing, tourism and processing of ornamental stone, are now

¹⁸ "Tribal Community" is here used for the Russian word *община* (*obshchina*) meaning a juridically recognised local community of indigenous people, with certain legal regulations of their economic activities, established for the purpose of securing a traditional way of life. Unlike indigenous communities or tribes in other countries, Tribal Communities in the Russian Federation are often composed of people belonging to various tribes or ethnic groups, as a result of the former Soviet forced relocation and centralisation policies. - Ed.

being developed. Some of these Tribal Communities persistently search for ways of solving problems of cultural preservation and development of traditional economic activities. For example, the "Oytung", Allaykhovskiy District – in 1989 the first Tribal Community of the Republic (organised by E.V. Edukin and V.N. Slepzov) – has restored a nomadic Council; moreover it has constructed some apartment houses in the location of a future village.

The Tribal Community "Nutendli", Nizhnekolymskiy District (head: V.I. Kemlil) has achieved an increase in the total number of reindeer obtained at the expense of the share. Now it works on development of the tribal flock. The Community "Yukte", Bulunskiy District (head: S. Isakov) – without any support and means – has created its industrial base: a fish processing factory, a smoking plant, and apartment houses for tourist accommodation. The Community "Tayga", Ust-Mayskiy District, is oriented towards processing of timber. In 1997 it also established a mini-plant for meat processing. Besides reindeer herding and other basic economic activities, the Community "Cheroda", Olekminskiy District (head: M.V. Bagaev) is engaged in processing of colored stones.

Arctic and State

Today, with the enthusiasm of the nomadic Communities and the financial support of the Ministry of the Peoples and Federative Relations of the Republic of Sakha, there are 12 restored settlements: Ugino, Gonam, Upper Amga, Uugut, Happarastakh (Aldanskiy District), Oytung (Allaykhovskiy D.), Utaya (Upper Kolymskiy D.), Ulakhan Kuel (Anabarskiy D.), Uyandi (Ust-Yanskiy D.), Alekseevka, Cheroda (Olekminskiy D.), and Tumul (Ust-Mayskiy D.). Tribal Communities are the main supporters of these villages.

The Tribal Communities have overcome huge difficulties. Shortly after the organisation of Tribal Communities, various state departments pronounced an economic boycott of them. Trading, transport and other organisations simply refused to purchase products of these Communities. More than tens – and sometimes hundreds – of tons of top quality meat and fish could not be sold on the market. The state departments – originally organised to implement the state policy of developing a strong material and technical base for reindeer herding, hunting and fishing – have turned into state-supported, commercial, monopolies – which view Tribal Communities as competitors and which therefore seek their economic failure.

Now, it is essential to gain state support for the formation of a normative and legal system, and for implementation of the laws. Such a system must regulate the relationship of the Arctic indigenous peoples and the State, mainly in the sphere of traditional economy and nature management, landholding, and forms of self-organisation which should be based on the terms of equal partnership.

Those individuals which have work in the Communities usually find a meaningful life and get out of social trouble and dependency. With definite support, Tribal Communities could become the real basis for a revival of traditional economic activities of the indigenous peoples of the North. Now, Communities have got strong links with comprehensive schools. Their members are engaged in training pupils, give classes on traditional branches of economy, and promote studies of their native language. In these circumstances, it is important to suspend processes of Communities division, i.e. the creation of smaller and less powerful ones. It is necessary to band together in order to maintain economic viability.

The Union of Nomadic Tribal Communities of the Republic of Sakha introduces a proposal to consider the following nomadic Tribal Communities as the main ones:

1. The nomadic Tribal Community "Oyotung" and "Linkeev Oldan", Allaykhovskiy District;
2. The nomadic Tribal Community "Oron" Nerungrinskiy District;
3. The nomadic Tribal Community of the village Beresovka, Srednekolymskiy District;
4. The association of nomadic Tribal Communities of the Ust-Mayskiy District;
5. The nomadic Tribal Communities "Gonam", "Happarastakh", Aldanskiy District;
6. The nomadic Tribal Communities "Udya" and "Kitillakh", Anabarskiy District;
7. The nomadic Tribal Communities "Sakhandisa", Bulunskiy District;
8. The nomadic Tribal Communities "Tekki Odulok", Verkhnekolymskiy District;
9. The nomadic Tribal Communities "Notari" and "Bakhikay", Yiganskiy District;
10. The nomadic Tribal Communities "Nutendli" and "Turvaargin", Nizhnekolymskiy District;
11. The association of Tribal Communities of the Ust-Yanskiy District.

Most of the territories of Tribal Communities have got a particular protected status. For example, the licensing for digging of mineral resources is conducted only after the coordination with local associations of the northern indigenous peoples and Tribal Communities. The nomadic Tribal Communities pursue the aims of reviving traditional ways of economy and also meeting the requirements of market conditions. Their activities today demonstrate viability and adaptability. The nomadic Community is how the nomadic peoples of the North are adapting to new market relations. The activity of communities has got real legal support. It is rendered by the laws of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutiya): "About Tribal, Patrimonial Nomadic Community of the Northern Indigenous Peoples", "About Legal Status of the Northern Indigenous Peoples", "About Hunting and Hunting Economy", "About Fishery, Fishing Economy and Preservation of Water Bioresources", and "About Reindeer Herding".

Canadians see gold in Russian paradise

Mining plans for parks called dangerous

The Globe and Mail, 8 August 2000, by Geoffrey York

Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, Russia -- Russia's new environmental regulators are lobbying for a scheme that could allow a Canadian mining company to dig for gold in a world-famous wilderness park.

If the plan goes ahead, Toronto-based Kinross Gold Corp. and other mining developers would be allowed to explore inside the Russian park's current borders. But alarmed environmentalists are vowing to fight it.

The Bystrinsky park reserve in the Russian Far East, established by the Kamchatka regional government in 1995, was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1996 because of its wealth of pristine rivers, brown bears, bighorn sheep, eagles, salmon, reindeer, more than 120 volcanoes and a number of endangered animals and plant species. It is also home to about 1,000 aboriginal people, including nomadic reindeer herders.

The southern part of the park also holds several unexplored gold deposits. The Russian Natural Resources Ministry, which was given authority over environmental matters in a move by President Vladimir Putin, wants the regional government to shift the park's border about 50 kilometres northward.

Environmentalists say it may be one of the first times a national government encourages industrial development in a UNESCO heritage site. They say it is a graphic example of how Mr. Putin's reforms are jeopardizing Russia's environment and expanding the power of lobbyists eager to exploit resources.

"It's a dangerous step," said Olga Chernyagina, a botanist and environmental leader who is a specialist on the Bystrinsky park.

"I think the response will be very strong. It would ruin Russia's reputation. Every other country in the world is proud of having a UNESCO heritage site."

But the head of the Kamchatka branch of the Natural Resources Ministry plays down the controversy.

"Most of the landscape of Bystrinsky has no particular interest or unique features," Yuri Garashchenko said in an interview. "The mountains and vegetation are typical. There are practically no salmon-spawning grounds there. We think the park's boundaries should be changed."

Kinross Gold Corp., operator and part-owner of the planned Aginskoye gold mine near the nature park, confirmed that it could benefit from the ministry's border proposal, although it hasn't formally requested the change. Kinross president Arthur Ditto said the gold deposits inside the park could eventually "sustain the longevity" of the Aginskoye project, which is currently suspended because of low gold prices.

The Kinross gold site, which is believed to contain 26 tonnes of gold, provoked a major battle in the mid-1990s when the mining company sought U.S. government financing. Western environmental groups helped to block the financing and secure the UNESCO designation for the park.

Mr. Garashchenko and Mr. Ditto both argue that development of gold mining would actually help the environment, because it would provide jobs for unemployed workers who would otherwise survive by illegally poaching salmon and bears.

For parks to survive in their natural state, they need a "viable economy" in the region nearby, Mr. Ditto said in an interview. "God knows the people there could use the economic development. They're desperate."

Even the Russian environmental protection committee, under authority of the Natural Resources Ministry, seems to be supporting the changes to the park's borders.

"I'm sure there was a mistake in the original boundaries," said Anatoly Yefimenko, head of the Kamchatka branch of the environment committee. "They didn't take into account the very important mineral deposits there."

After Mr. Putin transferred the committee's responsibilities to the Natural Resources Ministry, critics said it was like putting industrial foxes in charge of the environmental henhouse.

Russian officials acknowledge that the move is intended to speed up industrial development. "Until now, the state environment committee was trying to prevent gold mining at all costs," Mr. Garashchenko said. "The policy has to be changed. The balance will be shifted toward using these natural resources. We will try not to prohibit everything. The ministry's policy is that natural resources should be explored and exploited."

Along with supporting mining in the park, the Natural Resources Ministry is opposed to a proposal by the United Nations Development Program to include Bystrinsky park in a series of four Kamchatka nature reserves where the UNDP would help strengthen management and safeguard the environment.

At a public meeting last month in Kamchatka, the ministry told the UNDP that \$600-million (U.S.) could be generated in revenues from a nickel mine near Bystrinsky, compared with just \$10-million in new funds from the UNDP project.

One ministry official, Igor Petrenko, published an article denouncing the UNDP project and blaming "foreign-funded environmentalists" for the "well-organized sabotage" of the mining industry. He said mining projects around Bystrinsky are worth \$1.5-

billion and could produce up to \$90-million in annual revenues.

Environmental groups and aboriginal people from the Bystrinsky district are gathering support to protect the nature reserve and keep it within the UNDP project. Any change in the park's boundaries would be a dangerous precedent for other UNESCO heritage sites, they say.

"Gold mining will create a new network of roads, bringing in more people and reducing the animals and fish," Ms. Chernyagina said. "The reindeer pastures and migration routes will be destroyed. Gold mining uses cyanide, which could poison the rivers. Local people will be unable to follow their traditional way of life."

Gleb Raygorodetsky, a researcher with the U.S.-based Wildlife Conservation Society, said the establishment of Bystrinsky park has revived animal species that were heavily damaged by gold exploration at the Aginskoye site in the 1970s and 1980s.

"Only in the last couple of years have some species come back, including snow sheep," he said. "The

boundaries shouldn't be reduced. The organizations that worked hard to give it UNESCO World Heritage status will fight this."

Mining is not the only threat to Kamchatka's wilderness. The region is planning to spend \$200-million to build a 470-kilometre pipeline from gas deposits in Western Kamchatka to the regional capital, following a route near Bystrinsky park. According to a UNDP consultant's report, the pipeline and the mine are "the most imminent of the threats" to Kamchatka's salmon population.

The pipeline would cross 83 salmon-spawning rivers and streams. Environmentalists are worried it would open the way for large-scale oil and gas development in western Kamchatka, but the government argues it is essential to solve the region's energy shortage.

"Of course it will affect the environment," Mr. Garashchenko said. "But it's very important to Kamchatka -- we can't live without it."

Chukotka welfare programme „Unpener“

The social welfare organisation „Polar Star Union“ (in Chukotka „Unpener“) was founded 15 January 2000 and officially registered in Anadyr by the judicial department of the Chukotskiy Autonomous Okrug of Russia, Certificate No. 91, 24 February 2000.

Aim of the organisation is to provide a welfare support for the impoverished inhabitants of Chukotka, the elderly and handicapped, mothers with many children and young people. They are not only starving, but are also cold, as coal is lacking in many villages and liquid fuel for power plants is absent. Reindeer herders and hunters of Chukotka are also in a severe situation, as they have not received their salaries for years and cannot buy the most basic goods. Evidently, economic reform in Russia has derailed and for the last ten years there has been no rise in the standard of living. This situation will probably stagnate in Russia and Chukotka for years to come. We understand that it is impossible to create many jobs in a short time in Chukotka, and therefore a portion of the population will need to depend on welfare for a long time. As usual, neither the Okrug budget nor the municipal budgets of the regions have the means for complete social support of the population in need.

One of the effective ways such support can be realised is by providing humanitarian aid.

We believe that humanitarian aid should not only provide food, but also medicine and support to medical centres in the form of material and services, as well as dental services, providing instruments and transportation for traditional crafts, clothes and shoes, school equipment, etc.

The initiators of this welfare organisation are persons well known in Chukotka and who are genuinely familiar with the needs and problems of the population of this region. The president of the welfare organisation „Polar Star Union“ is Etylin Vladimir Mikhaylovich, vice president of the Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON). He is head of the laboratory of traditional exploiting of nature of the Chukotkan Department of *SVKNIM DVO* Russian Academy of Science and lives in Anadyr. Elected as vice presidents are Mikhail Antonovich Zelenskiy, president of the production centre „Nukan“ in the Chukotka region – he works as a radio journalist at the Chukotkan national radio and lives in the village of Lavrentiya – and Anna Mikhaylovna Kutynkeva, member of the Okrug parliament, president of the „Kayettyn“ community of the Bilibino region, and living in Bilibino.

Our activities are based on the federal laws of the Russian Federation „On humanitarian aid and humanitarian organisations“ and „On social unions“.

The following is a list of required forms of support:

1. Food
2. Children's food - milk based nutrition, vitamins, juices, fruits, vegetables; dried or in cans
3. Clothes and shoes for adults
4. Clothes and shoes for children
5. School supplies for children and school equipment
6. Tools and instruments for crafts, sewing, household, etc.

KAMCHATKA - CHUKOTKA

7. Craft and transportation equipment - boat motors, snow mobiles with spare parts, fishing gear (nets, rods, spoonbaits), binoculars, stoves, thermoses, halyards, lamps, etc.
 8. Medicine and sanitary/hygienic equipment (with certificates)
 9. Medical equipment (with certificates)
 10. Medical service, including dental specialists and opticians
 11. Special clothes for reindeer herders
 12. Special clothes for hunters
 13. Children's books and dictionaries
 14. Children's toys
 15. Supplies for pregnant women and newborn children
 16. Means for curing alcoholism and tobacco addiction
 17. Literature for school and pre-school organisations
 18. Subscriptions of newspapers, magazines, video films for organisations
 19. Subscriptions of magazines, newspapers and video films for village libraries
 20. Covering costs for treatment of individual, heavy illness
 21. Covering costs for education of significantly gifted children
 22. Special aid programmes for homes for the handicapped, homes for children, homes for the elderly and boarding schools for indigenous children.
- Addresses of our representatives and branches, for contact and correspondence:
1. Central office - 689000 Russia, Chukotka, Anadyr, a/ya 119, phone/fax (+7) (47422) 2-62-66, e-mail: etylins@anadyr.ru
 2. Provedeniya branch, Chukotskiy Autonomous Okrug, Ivan Vasilevich Tanko, phone (+7) (235) 2-29-54
 3. Lavrentiya branch, Chukotskiy Autonomous Okrug, Ulitsa Dezhnevaya 41a, appt. 6, phone/fax (+7) (236) 2-26-69, Mikhail Antonovich Zelenskiy
 4. Branch in Bilibino, Arktika mikrorayon, Chukotskiy Autonomous Okrug, house 5, wing 3, appt. 12, phone (+7) (238) 2-60-19, Anna Mikhailovna Kutynkeva
 5. Beringovskiy branch, Chukotskiy Autonomous Okrug, Ulitsa Beregovaya, phone (+7) (233) 22-33 and 24-22, Stanislav Fedorovich Taranenko
 6. Moscow branch: Rublevskoye Chaussee 34, wing 2, room 341, phone/fax (+7) (095) 415-53-19, e-mail: yetylins@ftcetner.ru, Olga Vladimirovna Etylina
 7. Magadan branch, pos. Palatka, Ulitsa Komsomolskaja, Kislova Anna Ilinichna.
 8. Alaska branch, USA: Andrey Khalkachan, 221, Meyer st. 13, Anchorage, AK 99508, phone (+1) (907) 277-79-83.
e-mail: akhalkachan@hotmail.com

NOTES

Save-the-reindeer project launched in far north

Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty reported on 7 November 2000

An international project has been launched to save Eurasia's largest population of wild reindeer, whose home is in the Taymyr Autonomous Okrug, Interfax reported on 7 November. Those animals have become increasingly at risk as the region has become more industrialized. Industrial pollutants have forced the reindeer to change their traditional migration routes, while the construction of oil and gas pipelines has made migration difficult and resulted in entire herds perishing. The UN Development Program (UNDP), the Global Ecological Fund, and Taymyr's non-governmental Arctic Ring organization are all involved in the project, to which UNDP is prepared to contribute 1 million US dollars.

JC

Finland provides funds to help aboriginals in Russia's North

*ITAR-TASS News Agency, 8 January 2001
By Andrey Popov*

Finland, which chairs the Arctic Council, has allocated 700,000 Markkas (around 105,000 dollars) to a programme to ensure food security and health care for the indigenous population of northern areas of Russia. The programme is one of priority importance in Finland's activities in the Arctic Council, the Finnish Foreign Ministry said.

The programme has been implemented alongside a monitoring programme spearheaded by the Arctic Council and the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North. The overall investments into these programmes have been estimated at 2.7 billion dollars.

The food and health security programme intended for a term of three years has already been under way. It encompasses research on territories of a number of northern areas of Russia, including the Kola Peninsula and areas along the Pechora River populated by local ethnic groups.

The Arctic Council was established in 1996 as a forum whose purpose is to resolve environmental problems in the Arctic region, give cultural, economic and social support to the people of the region, and develop cooperation.

The AMAP phase 2 programme "Persistent Toxic Substances, Food Security and Indigenous Peoples of the Russian North"

AMAP (Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme) Phase 2 has started up with new sampling series to assess pollution effects on the ecosystem, with a special focus on humans. The three-year project "Persistent Toxic Substances, Food Security and Indigenous Peoples of the Russian North" is carried out under this umbrella. It is a joint project of RAIPON and AMAP, funded by most of the Arctic countries and GEF (Global Environment Facility), the Nordic Council of Ministers, etc. Objectives are to map the consumption of contaminants and the effects of this on the indigenous population in the northern part of the Russian Federation. Main targets are insecticides, PCB, mercury, etc. Sampling of soil, water, organic material, etc. started in autumn 2000. Health studies will commence with a workshop in St. Petersburg in February 2001. Four areas are selected for representative studies: Kola Peninsula, Pechora area, Taymyr, and Kamchatka. RAIPON's federal and regional administration will actively participate in the project.

Meetings, workshops, conferences

Sami Council meeting

Time: 1-3 March 2001
Place: Lovozero, Murmansk, Russia
Contacts: Sami Council Secretariat, Utsjoki, Finland; Phone: +358 16 677 351 / +358 16 677 353
E-mail: samiradd@netti.fi

Conference 'Stable Development and Regional Nature Use'

Time: April 2001
Place: Technological Institute, Vladivostok, Russia
Contacts: Address: 690041 Vladivostok, ul. Radio 7, Phone/fax: +7 4232 31-21-59

NOTES - MEETINGS

4th Congress of the Indigenous Peoples of the North

Time: 11-14 April 2001

Place: Moscow, Russia

Information: *Draft agenda:*

- "Our Destiny is in Our Hands". On the situation of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East; on the forms of development; strategy for RAIPON activity and its role in the indigenous movement until 2005; report to the Congress by Sergey Kharyuchi, RAIPON President
- On the contemporary Russian State Policy concerning the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East; presentation by Ministry of Economic Development and Trade and the Ministry of Federation, National and Migrational Policy (to be confirmed)
- Development of the Legislation Process to serve the interests of indigenous peoples in the northern regions of Russia; presentation by Valentina Pivnenko, Chairman of the State Duma Committee (to be confirmed)
- Report to the Congress by the RAIPON Auditing Commission
- On the Modifications and Amendments to the RAIPON Chapter; presentation by Mikhail Todyshev, RAIPON Vice-President
- Election of the RAIPON President
- Adoption of the Coordinating Council membership; election of the Coordinating Council members
- Election of the Auditing Commission

Contacts: Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON)

Phone/fax: +7 (095) 930-44-68 / +7 (095) 938-95-27; E-mail: raipon@online.ru

Seminar 'Ethnosocial Processes in Siberia'

Time: May 2001

Place: Inst. of Philosophy and Rights OII FSO, Russian Academy of Sciences, Novosibirsk, Russia

Contacts: Address: 630090 Novosibirsk, pr. Lavrent'eva 17; Phone/fax: +7 3832 302786

4th International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS IV)

Time: 16-20 May 2001

Place: Quebec City, Canada

Information: *Theme:* "The Power of Traditions: Identities, Politics and Social Sciences".

The objective of the congress is to share ideas and results on social sciences research done in the Arctic. Suggested sessions include: 1) archaeological and historical heritage in Nunavik, 2) arts and artists, 3) community-oriented projects in archaeology, 4) dictionary making for Inuit languages, 5) education, 6) economy, 7) environmental changes and society, 8) food security, 9) governance and aboriginal people, 10) languages and oral traditions, 11) memory and history, 12) oral history research, 13) rapid cultural changes in the North, 14) teaching aboriginal languages, 15) third worldisation of Northern Russia, 16) transition in health status and medical practices, 17) University of the Arctic, 18) zoo-archaeology. No translation is provided during presentations.

Deadlines: Abstracts: September 15, 2000

Accommodation: April 16, 2001

Contacts: E-mail: iassa.getic@fss.ulaval.ca

Web-site: <http://www.fss.ulaval.ca/iassa>

Second World Reindeer Herders Congress

Time: 18-23 June 2001

Place: Inari, Finland

Information: *Main theme:* To present reindeer husbandry in Finland.

The aim of the congress is to promote contact between the different reindeer peoples/herders, and to disseminate information about reindeer husbandry. Organised by The Association of World Reindeer Herders, which is an organisation representing all reindeer peoples/herders in the world.

Contacts: Sami Council, The Secretariat, Utsjoki, Finland

Phone/fax: +358 16 677 351 / +358 16 677 353

E-mail: samiradd@netti.fi

NOTES - MEETINGS

7th Circumpolar Universities Co-operation Conference

Time: 19-21 August 2001
Place: Tromsø, Norway
Information: Organised by the Circumpolar Universities Association (CUA)
Conference objectives: Encourage increased interaction among people of different cultures in the north, and to exchange traditional knowledge and academic learning in closer partnership for securing better management of the area in the future. Themes: 1) Environment and Resources Management 2) Regional Co-operation and Survival in the North 3) Telemedicine and Health Telematics 4) Northern Identities - Articulating the Circumpolar 5) Indigenous Peoples and 6) Higher Education in the Circumpolar North
Contacts: *Frits Jensen, University of Tromsø, Norway*
Fax.: +47 77 67 66 72
E-mail: frits.jensen@arctic.uit.no, b-site: <http://www.arctic.uit.no>

Bering Sea Summit 2001

Time: 1-5 October 2001
Place: Egan Center, Anchorage, Alaska
Information: *Purpose:* To foster open dialogue among the highly diverse organisations, management agencies and communities in the Bering Sea region in order to establish creative alliances and partnerships, and achieve sustainable policies and durable decisions.
Who should participate? Resource managers, commercial and industrial interests, subsistence users, scientists, local communities, native organisations, community leaders and conservationists, anyone with an interest in the future of the Bering Sea watershed and its resources. This includes most communities in Alaska, as well as foreign interests.
Why? The Bering Sea region is changing fast. With significant drops in species such as Steller sea lions, northern fur seals, murre, and kittiwakes, with concerns about contaminants in the environment and subsistence foods, the rapid warming of Arctic environments, and recent plummets in salmon returns, there is no reason for complacency in our current policies. If the Bering Sea watershed is to remain the most productive ocean system in a rapidly changing world, the Bering Sea community must forge a new strategic vision that can be endorsed by the diverse array of interested parties ... people and organisations who care passionately but differently about the Bering Sea and its resources.
Outcome: A multi-party strategic vision for protecting and utilising Bering Sea resources.
How to get involved: The Summit offers many opportunities for involvement. We are seeking:
* Sponsors to plan for success;
* Participants from the full spectrum of interests in the Bering Sea;
* Exhibitors to share new innovations and technologies;
* Artists to express creative appreciation for the Bering Sea and its resources;
* Youth to test their innovations and thinking at a Bering Sea Science Fair.
Contacts: *Suzanne Marcy*
Phone: 907/271-2895, Fax: 907/271-3424, E-mail: marcy.suzanne@epa.gov

International Scientific-Practical Conference 'G.E. Vereshchagin and Ethno-Cultural Development of the People of the Urals-Volga Region'

Time: October 2001
Place: Izhevsk, Russia
Contacts: Udmurtian Institute of History, Language and Literature Ur.O, Russian Academy of Sciences,
Address: 426004 Izhevsk, ul. Lomonosova 4; Phone: +7 3412 755394; Fax: +7 3412 753994

All-Russian Conference 'Energy of the North'

Time: October 2001
Place: Syktyvkar, Komi Republic, Russia
Contacts: Institute of Social Economy and Energy Problems of the North, Komi NTs Ur., Russian Academy of Sciences, *Address: Komi Republic, 467610 Syktyvkar, ul. Kommunisticheskaya 26; Phone/fax: +7 8212 424267*

CONTACTS - ADDRESSES

CONTACTS AND ADDRESSES - UPDATE

A complete list of ANSIPRA contacts and addresses was published in ANSIPRA Bulletin No. 4. Below are listed changes that have occurred in the meantime and new contacts.

Changed addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses

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ICC (Inuit Circumpolar Conference, Циркумпольная Конференция Инuitов)

iccgreenland@inuit.org

Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat (IPS), Arctic Council (Секретариат Коренных Народов Арктического Совета)

ips@ghsdk.dk

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DK-1016 København K

ph./тел. (+45) 33 69 34 30

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New contacts

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Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H4

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fax/факс (+1) 819-953 0546

finklerh@inac.gc.ca

Canadian Embassy

c/o François Laberge

Wergelandsveien 7

N-0244 Oslo

ph./тел. (+47) 22 99 53 00

fax/факс (+47) 22 99 53 61

francois.laberge@dfait-maeci.gc.ca

MacArthur Foundation (Фонд Макаптуров)

с/о Устинова Галина Владимировна (Galina V. Ustinova)

8 Хлебный переулок, д. 8, этаж 2

IWGIA (International Working Group on Indigenous Affairs, Международная Рабочая Группа по ДелаM Коренных Народов)

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DK-2100 København Ø

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fax/факс (+45) 35 27 05 07

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WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature, Фонд Дикой Природы), Danish section

www.wwf.dk

Taiga Rescue Network (Сеть Спасения Тайги)

info@taigarescue.org

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Translations from "Мир коренных народов – живая арктика" (Indigenous Peoples' World – Living Arctic)

According to an agreement between ANSIPRA and RAIPON (Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North), we present translations of selected articles of the newsletter "Мир коренных народов" (Indigenous Peoples' World), the official periodical of RAIPON. The following part of this issue presents translated articles from Indigenous Peoples' World No. 4, 2000, with the exception of the article "The drama of the Vorkuta Nenets", which is taken from Indigenous Peoples' World No. 3, 2000.

Dear readers!

On July the 20th, 2000, the President of the Russian Federation signed the Federal Law "On general organisational principles for communities of the indigenous minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation".

Adoption of this law is a step forward towards recognition of the distinctive features of indigenous self-government. Unfortunately, very few suggestions by RAIPON were included in the Law. Therefore the Law does not adequately reflect the historical roots of self-determination among Northern indigenous minorities, nor their legal, social and economic position in our society today.

The indigenous population of the Russian North who maintain traditional ways live in small polyethnic separate groups connected by kin, neighbourly, economic, and cultural interests. The real structure and the functions of these groups are not described by any existing legislation on local self-government, or in the legislation on non-commercial or commercial organisations.

The indigenous people constitute a minority within most administrative boundaries. Since their interests in many cases differ from the interests of the migrants, the indigenous people do not have an opportunity to achieve and protect their interests on the basis the civil legislation.

Special legislation needs to be adopted to create a legal base for indigenous self-government founded on traditional and new forms of decision-making among indigenous groups, to reflect traditional ways of life, in accordance with international standards and the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

Internationally, several models for indigenous self-government have been adopted. Examples include the Saami Parliament, the Home Rule of Greenland, and the Nunavut region in Canada. However, none may be exactly replicated in our country. The greatest challenge is to create a grass-roots structure of local self-government on the basis of agricultural communities in the traditional areas of indigenous inhabitation. This — along with attaining an adequate standard of living among indigenous people — are the most difficult tasks and have yet to be achieved anywhere so far.

International science and practice use the concept of a "community". On one hand, it is used as an ideal description of a category of primary self-organisation, on the other hand, it is the lowest unit of local self-government. The use of the term "community" has a long and confusing history in our country. The word is used in official documents to refer to various religious associations, Cossack groups, and urban ethnic associations. Under the new Law, small kin and tribal groups of indigenous minorities that maintain traditional economies will be registered as "indigenous communities". Naturally, the purposes and opportunities of these communities differ. For a "community" that consists of a single large family, surviving in the framework of the traditional economy, registering itself as a legal entity may hardly seem worth the effort involved. At the same time, an association of such communities may be a necessary structure of self-government to protect the interests of the communities. The members of the communities may live apart — some may maintain a traditional way of life in agriculture, others may live in the city and support the agricultural communities economically, legally, and culturally. This is how Northern indigenous minorities live. This is not taken into account in the new Law on indigenous communities.

However, legal registration of social, economic, and cultural functions of the communities as natural indigenous associations is inevitable at the present stage of societal development. Without legally defined communities as basic units of indigenous self-government, it is impossible to create an efficient self-government on the federal level; it is impossible to manage traditional territories. Problems in adapting indigenous life to modern legislation, and the legislation to real life, is most relevant for indigenous people today.

We suggest discussing and drafting suggestions, additions and amendments to the Law, and the corresponding amendments to the federal and regional legislation, at the 4th RAIPON Congress. We ask our readers to inform us about the problems encountered in implementation of the Law and the existing legislation on indigenous affairs, and to inform us about your experience with self-government and self-organisation of social, economic and cultural life in indigenous communities.

-- The editors of "Mir korenykh narodov"

IV Arctic Parliamentarians Meeting (Rovaniemi, 28 August 2000)

Statement of Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON)

Sergey Kharyuchi, President of RAIPON

Dear Arctic Parliamentarians, dear friends and colleagues,

During recent years indigenous peoples of the North in Russia have become actively involved in the international process shaping the concept of sustainable development. This includes participation through RAIPON's representation in the Arctic Council and its specialized programmes. It also includes close cooperation with the UN and its agencies: UN Environment Programme, International Labour Organization, World Health Organization, World Intellectual Property Organization, UN Development Programme. In addition, we co-operate with the International Red Cross Organization. With respect to this participation I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the parliaments and governments of Denmark, Canada, USA, Norway, Sweden and Finland for their regular support and funding allocated for the indigenous peoples of the Russian North. We also are grateful to the northern countries, above all, to Denmark for its active position at all stages of the discussion concerning the issue of the Permanent Forum of Indigenous Peoples within the UN. We greatly respect your initiatives. As you know, the recent Economic and Social Council Session in New York has adopted the decision on establishing such a forum and we hope that in the forthcoming Political Declaration of the Arctic Council Ministers this fact will be noted as a *new, important step towards partnership and integrity at the global level*.

A national concept of sustainable development in Russia is now being formed. Broader participation by the indigenous peoples of the country is of primary importance because they have a great deal to contribute to the government's idea of sustainable development. The sacredness of land (the Earth) is the basis of indigenous beliefs and traditions. Basic to this spirituality is respect for all things in the world. We are taught right from the day that we learn to walk to respect nature and its relationship to all elements of our universe. Our knowledge of our environment – our universe – is deep and extensive. Our understanding of it is even greater. We do not separate ourselves from the land. We do not dare to destroy that which we do not understand. We do not seek to conquer all things, but rather, we strive for understanding, appreciation, respect and acceptance. Recognizing the unique character of the indigenous attitude towards nature, land and the environment, *broader participation by indigenous peoples in the building of a National Strategy and a National Plan of Action for sustainable development is of primary importance*.

Policy options for the transition towards sustainable development include accelerating the adoption of legislation on the rights of indigenous peoples in Russia, definition and legal protection of the territories for traditional land use, and support for sustainable economic development in the aboriginal subsistence areas. The current Russia's legislation is far from perfect, and there are problems in the process of its adoption and enforcement. It took nine years within the Russian Parliament to adopt in April 1999 the framework law "On guarantees of the rights for indigenous minority peoples in the Russian Federation". Parliamentary hearings in June 2000 revealed that not a single article of this law can be realized without specific enforcement measures. It means that there is an urgent need for the development and introduction of a whole set of rules and procedures at the national, regional and local levels. The indigenous peoples' organizations are the parties with the most at stake in this process. Using experience and capacity gained through its involvement in international projects, RAIPON is ready to work on these legislative issues. Established cooperation and partnerships with scientists and specialists in the Federal agencies will also be useful for determination of the borders of traditional subsistence areas, and their conceptual description and classification for establishing protection and self-management in the regions of the North.

Examples of a parity approach towards sustainable development in the aboriginal lands in the North can be found in the agreements between the Inuit and the Canadian government. These agreements not only define territories under the jurisdiction, but also the rights of aborigines and permanent residents on the territory, the rights of the non-indigenous population, the rights of regional and federal governments to land and mineral resources, as well as methods of land and nature use and a partnership for monitoring and management. We do not know the detailed history preceding the conclusion of these agreements. However, we can imagine that there were many decades of conflict and a long period of joint work by government and aboriginal organizations aimed at preserving the indigenous lifestyle, *regulating their claims to government on the basis of bilateral agreements*, and thus setting up conditions for sustainable development of the regions in which indigenous people live. The experience of Canada and the other Northern states in creating the conditions for sustainable development in the regions based on a parity approach is extremely important and might be useful for Russia today and in the future.

In order to resolve the problems in a most effective way, the peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of Russia need to work in partnership with the Russian government and with other groups of the Russian society to attain the goal of sustainable development of the region. It will be necessary to elaborate basic concepts for every region, with input from Russian and international experts, and taking into account local conditions.

To effectively solve their problems, the indigenous peoples have to establish a voice in the supreme governmental body – the State Parliament. At present indigenous peoples in Russia have no such forum or representation. During the last elections not a single indigenous person became a Deputy at the State Duma. It does not mean that we do not have appropriate candidates, just that the Federal legislation does not include any quota, or permanent seats, in the Parliament for indigenous peoples, which makes the election of indigenous candidates difficult. Therefore an establishment of the Indigenous Parliament, a Saami-style innovation, could be of great importance for us. Jointly with the State Duma and Saami Parliaments of the Nordic countries, RAIPON orga-

nized in March 1999 a Round Table for sharing experiences of work with the respective governments. We are now striving to follow up the Round Table Resolution and foster its recommendations. This autumn we are going to submit to the Duma our draft law, «*On the Parliament of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Russian Far East*». We have to establish this body eventually, and this might be an issue for international Arctic assistance and support.

Today, in this period of reforms, the indigenous peoples of Russia must propose a stable, non-confrontational relationship between government and the non-indigenous population, aimed at preserving the indigenous culture, lifestyle, traditional economy, and self-management as well as the environmental protection of their territories. Partnership, in our opinion, is the most promising instrument. It is possible only when *both parties pursue a common goal* to ensure sustainable development of the traditional territories where indigenous peoples live and, eventually, social and economic stability.

Thank you for your attention. May I wish you success in all your initiatives!

International Youth conference on "The indigenous peoples and the environment of the Russian North"

Tomsk, 4-6 September, 2000

Daria Kudriashova

From 4 to 6 September the Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation (RAIPON) organised an international youth conference, "The Indigenous peoples and the environment of the Russian North", in the town of Tomsk. The participants represented youth organisations of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East. Unfortunately, the representatives of the industry though invited did not participate in the conference. Those present at the conference were surprised as it seems to be crucial to start a dialogue between the indigenous peoples and the industry due to the intensive industrial development of natural resources of the North, Siberia and the Far East.

The main aim of the conference was to attract the attention of the young generation to the major environmental problems in the territories of traditional use of natural resources in the North, Siberia and the Far East of Russian Federation. This aim has been achieved.

The first day of the conference was allocated to welcome addresses by Mr Ivan Karelin, the regional president of the RAIPON branch of the Tomskaya Oblast and the Head of "Kolta Kup", and by Ms Olga Proskurina, the Deputy Head of the Department of

Labour Market and Traditional Use of Natural Resources at the Ministry of Federal, Ethnic and Migrational Policies. Ms Irina Shafrannik, the RAIPON vice-president, and Mr Thomas Koehler, the Adviser at the Danish Agency for Environmental Protection, presented introductory reports.

Key reports were presented by Mr Aleksandr Veselov, the Executive Manager of Ekoyuris, the Institute for Environmental and Legal Problems ("The Industry in the North and the Indigenous peoples - a compromise or a conflict?", based on the example of the oil companies that work in the North), by Ms Layla Zeynalova, a barrister based in Moscow, on behalf of the Legal Centre "Rodnik" ("The realisation of rights of the indigenous peoples as a tool of environmental protection"), by Ms Olga Murashko, IW-GIA's Russian Co-ordinator ("The right to traditional use of natural resources and to the traditional knowledge"), by Ms Larisa Abryutina, RAIPON Vice-President on matters of public health ("The demographics and the health of the indigenous peoples - the policy of preservation"). A discussion followed the reports. The representatives of youth organisations could share their experiences in order to determine the place of the indigenous youth in the decision-making

process for environmental problems, to designate priorities and to define directions for activities in the future.

Further, the reports of the Arctic Council programmes and the reports of the Environmental UN-UNEP Programme were presented.

A training workshop on project drafting was conducted in the framework of the Conference. The participants could study new ways of drafting project proposals based on recommendations of the Programme of Arctic Evaluation Monitoring. Thomas Koehler and Daria Kudriashova conducted the workshop.

Main results of the Conference are the Resolution and RAIPON's Youth Programme, adopted on the basis of suggestions and amendments made by the participants. The resolution suggests the establishment of an initiative group on environmental affairs with 13 representatives of various Russian regions. The Initiative Group has the task to organise work in the guidelines of the Programme and to control the implementation of decisions in the resolution. An action plan was discussed and adopted by the Group.

The conference has attracted interest of the local authority in the Tomskaya Oblast. The Conference was in the local TV news, where Mr Pavel Sulyandziga, RAIPON Vice-president, spoke in a direct transmission.

The Department for Public Relations of the Legislative Assembly in Tomsk was as well interested in

the conference. The contribution of the Department to the work of the conference was quite significant, as they approached the conference organisers to become partners and to establish co-operation.

The young participants of the conference were very active. They came from all over the country. They were all very different, clever, young and beautiful! The regional associations chose the representatives to participate in the workshop themselves. In result, the young people arrived burning with desire to work and realise the ideas. One has to note Tatyana Korzh of the Association of the Khabarovskiy Kray, Youth centre "Fenisk Amura", Dmitri Berezhev of Council for the Revival of the Itelmeni, newspaper "Aborigen Kamchatki", Nikolay Latyshev of the Nets Association "Yasavey", and many, many others who contributed significantly to the work of the conference. The students of Tomsk deserve a special gratitude for all the local organising work they did.

Because of their efforts, the young participants managed to work at the conference and to get acquainted with the town, to go on lengthy tours, visit the local ethnographic museum and achieve a lot more.

I believe we managed to become friends and find a common language with everybody at the conference. I hope the words said in Tomsk won't be forgotten, and the great plans will be realised.

I hope everything will be as intended.

The Resolution of the International Youth conference on "The indigenous peoples and the environment of the North, Siberia and the Far East"
Tomsk, 4-6 September, 2000

We, the participants of the International Youth Conference "The indigenous peoples and the environment of the North, Siberia and the Far East", representing the indigenous youth of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation, and the indigenous youth of the Arctic region,

- **Understanding** the responsibility for the future of the indigenous peoples and for the preservation of our environment,
- **Taking into account** the experience of the elder generation in environmental protection,
- **Taking into account** the decisions by previous forums on environmental and indigenous affairs of the North, Siberia and the Far East,
- **Taking into account** the foreign and the Russian experience of the 'spirit for the new partnership', proclaimed by at 47th UN General Assembly,
- **Understanding** that the environment in the residence areas of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East forms a basis of existence and life of the indigenous peoples,
- **Taking into account** the modern trend of expansion of the industrial development in the North, Siberia and the Far East,
- **Assessing** the degradation of the environment in the North, Siberia and the Far East, which effects the way of life, and the life itself of the indigenous peoples in the North, Siberia and the Far East, that in turn leads to inevitable changes in the state of flora and fauna of the Arctic North,
- **Taking into account** the data on environmental catastrophes as a result of activities by the industry and the military forces in the Arctic region,
- **Understanding** the necessity to establish partnerships in the decision-making process and the process of preservation of the Arctic environment between the organisations of the indigenous peoples, the federal and the regional authorities, the local authorities, the industry, Russian and international environmental organisations,
- **Having discussed** these problems at the workshop,

Express concern by the state of environment of the North, Siberia and the Far East, underline the necessity to implement urgent actions in order to solve the environmental problems of the North, Siberia and the Far East. The development of partnerships and of joint actions to preserve the environment is a sound base to cooperate and to achieve our purposes. We adopt the following decisions and recommendations:

1. **To approve** actions and intentions of the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East (RAIPON), the national authorities, the Russian and international non-governmental organisations, that are directed towards developing partnerships in order to preserve and achieve reasonable use of natural resources in the North, Siberia and the Far East, to protect and restore the environment, and also towards other actions on sustainable development of the Arctic region.
2. **To express** support to RAIPON's actions directed towards sustainable development and preservation of the environment in regions of the North, Siberia and the Far East.
3. **To address** the President of the Russian Federation and demand
 - **To restore** a federal independent governmental agency on supervision of implementation of the environmental legislation,
 - **To speed up** the adoption of the legislation on implementation of the constitutional rights of the indigenous peoples and ethnic groups, in order to protect our traditional environment and traditional way of life.
4. **To address** the General Prosecutor of the Russian Federation
 - **To inspect** the compliance with the Law "On Guarantees of the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples of Russian Federation".
5. **To address** the Government of Russian Federation with the demand to
 - **To comply** with the environmental legislation of the Russian Federation and the international standards on environmental protection,
 - **To adopt** urgent actions to preserve and to restore environments of the North, Siberia and the Far East,
 - **To ensure** the control and monitoring of the state of environment of the North, Siberia and the Far East, with obligatory participation of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East,
 - **To adopt** actions to implement constitutional rights of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East, in the field of protection of a traditional way of life on the traditional areas,
 - **According** to the Constitution and the laws of the Russian Federation **to ensure** the full participation of the indigenous peoples in actions and programs on the use, control and protection of the environment of the North, Siberia and the Far East, based on principles of partnership.
6. **To address** to Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation with the demand
 - **To adopt** actions on improvement of the legislative base on participation of the indigenous peoples of the North in the control of the use of natural resources and of environmental protection of the North, Siberia and the Far East with participation of the representatives of organisations of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East in drafting the legislation.
 - **To adopt** the federal law "On Territories of Traditional Use by the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation", taking into account the suggestions of the elected representatives of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East.
7. **To address** the executive and legislative authorities in the regions of the Russian Federation, where the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East live, with the recommendation
 - **To ensure** the development of a legal base on protection of the traditional way of life of the traditional areas of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East, and the control of compliance with this legislation,
 - **To attract** the regional organisations of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East to the decision-making process on the base of partnership, **to distribute** experience of such cooperation onto other regions of the North, Siberia and the Far East,
 - **Not to allow** the practice of licensing areas of a traditional use of natural resources to industrial development without co-ordination with the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East,
 - **To develop**, together with regional associations of the indigenous peoples and centres of protection and use of historical and cultural monuments, a programme on preservation and protection of indigenous sanctuaries, places of worship, and archaeological monuments.
8. **To address** the management of the companies that use natural resources in the residence areas of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East, with the demand
 - **To take into account** the international experience of interaction with organisations of the indigenous peoples in discussions of programmes of industrial development in the North, in Siberia and in the Far East of the Russian Federation,
 - **To use** the best environmentally safe technologies,

- **To comply** strictly with the Russian laws and international agreements on environmental protection and use of natural resources,
 - **To carry out** public hearings on environmental matters and ethnoecological assessments when developing new deposits in the residence and traditional use areas of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East, according to the Constitution and legislation of Russian Federation,
 - **To distribute** the information on new projects, including possible consequences of their implementation, to involve the elected representatives of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East to monitor implementation of the projects.
9. **To address** the Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East with the recommendation
- **To develop** the concept of strategic planning and an action plan for the Association with participation of youth in order to present and adopt them at the IV Congress of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East, to assist in preparation of the Congress of indigenous youth,
 - **To promote** the participation of the indigenous youth in the environmental actions and programs of the Association, and to organise annual youth conferences on the indigenous peoples and the environment of the Russian North,
 - **To promote** the participation of the indigenous youth in the international environmental programs of the indigenous peoples, and in the programs of the Arctic Council on sustainable development,
 - **To promote** the establishment of a Youth information environmental network on the state of environment in the North, Siberia and the Far East,
 - **To conduct** training workshops on ecology, project development, fundraising and computer use locally among the indigenous youth,
 - **To establish** a database on environmental and other violations in the residence areas of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East, to publish the information on the violation in the magazine of the Association "Indigenous Peoples' World - Living Arctic", and on the web-site,
 - **To distribute** the information and experience in environmental decision-making and decision-making in the area of traditional use of natural resources among the indigenous youth of the North, Siberia and the Far East,
 - **To promote** implementation of the Youth programme of actions adopted at the conference.
10. **To address** the regional Associations of the indigenous peoples of the North with the recommendation
- To involve the youth in the establishment of a database on environmental and other violations in the residence areas of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East,
 - **To involve** the indigenous youth in activities of the associations, especially in the development of the new information technologies,
 - The participation in the regional environmental programmes,
 - The development and implementation of the programmes on studies and preservation of traditional indigenous knowledge,
11. **To address** the Board of Directors of the ethnic enterprises of RAIPON with the suggestion
- **To create** a Fund of support to the indigenous youth organisations with participation of RAIPON,
 - **To involve** the youth in the programmes on small business and on environmental and ethnic tourism.
12. **To address** the youth and the indigenous youth organisations of the peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East with the following suggestions:
- **To participate** in the movement of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East and in the activities of the Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East, and of the other non-governmental organisations of the indigenous peoples,
 - **To take an active part** in the development and the implementation of the Youth programme of the Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East, to present and adopt at the IV Congress of the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation,
 - **To create** a youth environmental network of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East,
 - **To distribute** information on the state of environment in the residence territories of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East,
 - **To develop and to implement** the programmes of studies, preservation and distribution of traditional knowledge of the indigenous peoples.

In order to implement the adopted decisions, the Conference has decided:

1. To establish a Youth Initiative Group on environmental affairs of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East, with participation of:

1. Aleksandr Krivnogornitsyn (Kamchatskaya Oblast)
2. Vladislav Peskov (Nenets Autonomous Okrug)
3. Daria Kudriashova (Tomsk Oblast)
4. Sergey Novyukhov (Khanty-Manisiyskiy Autonomous Okrug)
5. Irina Shafrannik (Tomskaya Oblast)
6. Aleksandr Arbachkov (Kemerovskaya Oblast)
7. Tatyana Korzh (Khabarovskaya Oblast)
8. Nikolai Latyshev (Nenetskiy Autonomous Okrug)
9. Elena Nitkuk (Sakhalinskaya Oblast)
10. Irina Simanshuk (Primorskiy Kray)
11. Valeriya Ivanchenko (Baykitskiy Rayon, Krasnoyarskiy Kray)
12. Olesiya Lavsrishuk (Magadanskaya Oblast)
13. Alēna Petrovskaya (Chukotskiy Autonomous Okrug)

2. To give the Initiative Group **the task** to:

- To organise work on the adopted programme and to control the implementation of the decisions in the Resolution;
- To provide information on the undertaken actions through mass media and Internet, on a regular basis;
- To draft and present a report on the implementation of the adopted programme and of the decisions in the Resolution of the Tomsk Conference, at the IV Congress of the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East;
- To present a Youth Programme with suggestions and amendments, at the IV Congress of the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East;
- To distribute information, the Resolution and the Programme of the Tomsk conference to the regions of the North, Siberia and the Far East through mass media and Internet.

Meeting of RAIPON representatives and Minister for Natural Resources 20 October 2000, Ministry for Natural Resources, Moscow

*Tamara Semenova,
RAIPON Project Coordinator*

Collaboration within Arctic Council programmes as well as the joint agreement on cooperation signed by the Ministry and RAIPON in January 2000 were among the topics discussed at the meeting. The Minister has confirmed his support for the international project, “Contaminants, Food Security and Indigenous Peoples of the Russian North“, initiated by AMAP and RAIPON and approved by the Arctic Council. The endorsement of this project by the Ministry for Natural Resources is a decisive factor in allocation of core funding from the Global Environmental Facility, and could help in the search for co-funding sources.

Furthermore, an issue related to the recently signed agreement was raised in the context of collaborative development. Mr. Pavel Sulyandziga, RAIPON Vice-President, noted that the main problems of indigenous peoples are connected either with land use or natural resource utilization. He pointed out that in many regions representatives of indigenous peoples are included in the fishing commissions. Mr. Sulyandziga said that it would be highly advisable to incorporate them into forest economy management bodies as well. Responding to this proposal, Mr. Boris

Yatskevich observed that according to the Law on Environmental Impact Assessment, types of nature use (fishing, wood cutting etc.) are a subject for coordination both at the regional and federal level. He proposed that RAIPON should interact with the Ministry territorial bodies with respect to decision-making on natural resource use. “Then, no decision will be made without RAIPON's approval on vital indigenous issues, and this is a more powerful tool than the requested participation. However”, he continued, “indigenous people cannot attempt to hold the position of a ‘tundra land-lord’ – it is mine, do not touch! All joint work shall be based and developed on the mutual agreement and cooperation of indigenous peoples and the state. On behalf of the Ministry, I am ready to sign any documents aimed at such cooperation”. Furthermore, the Minister continued: “we are not interested in accelerating and augmenting mineral resource extraction if the grazing is more economically sound, or other land use type is more profitable. We will support such use of natural resources that is most rational. We recognize that one cannot put a price tag on cultural reproduction; plainly, it is the dearest thing in the

world. Peoples that survived on their lands for ages, and have adapted to harsh natural conditions during millennia on the basis of sustainable production, deserve the highest respect. We understand that we don't talk about compromises, it is the consensus that counts. You will find partners in us".

Concerning the conflict between Yuriy Vella, the reindeer herder from the Khanty-Mansi region, and the Lukoil Company, Mr. Yatskevich proposed writing a letter to the Lukoil President Vagit Alekperov and demand that they propose specific measures for the resolution of such conflicts. Boris Yatskevich considers that the basis for this conflict lies in the lack of legal mechanisms or definite forms of compensa-

tion available to the aboriginal populations in the oil and gas regions. Compensation funds are currently established by voluntary agreements between the companies and indigenous populations, but there is as yet no compulsory funding allocation or enforcement. However, the Minister looks at this problem with the optimism to say: "Let's think together. As it was possible to solve these problems in Alaska and Canada, we shall be able to do the same in Russia". In conclusion, Minister Yatskevich declared that the Ministry for Natural Resources takes its agreement with RAIPON seriously and is committed to working with RAIPON to implement it.

Game grounds and reindeer rangelands: Re-registration or withdrawal?

Mikhail Todyshev, Nikita Kaplin, Olga Murashko and Olga Yakovleva

Citizens from numerous territories of the Russian Federation have sent alarming reports to RAIPON about the ongoing procedure of re-registration or withdrawal of reindeer rangelands and game grounds from indigenous peoples. We are being informed that re-registration is being done in favour of "legal entities". The indigenous clan communities and farms actually do not have a sufficient legal status, since at that time registration was done at the district level by a mere decision of the Head of the District Administration. Today the clan communities and farms have no opportunity for registration or lack information about how it is to be done. The majority of these entities are located far from the district centers; their members are engaged in traditional subsistence economies to provide for their families, which normally have many children. Conveyance, issuing of tax inspection certificates of non-profitability, and other bureaucratic subtleties present problems that are uncommon or, occasionally, unfeasible for reindeer herders and hunters. In these cases the administration gives the hunters and reindeer herders the "friendly advice" to hand over their plots to state farms in order to save themselves the trouble. But this is what the indigenous people do not want to do, because they are aware that their only maintaining their clan lands would provide for their families.

Some reports say that "the situation is aggravated by the fact that the above campaign has been launched at the time when the hunters have to go to the taiga ...

Some hunters have already been dropped in the taiga with no licenses, and would be regarded as poachers". Unfortunately, the majority of those complaints by indigenous people to RAIPON are not supplemented with copies of appropriate documents, which makes it difficult to understand the situation.

RAIPON has re-registration documents available from the Evenk Autonomous Okrug, which appear to be typically contradictory. When getting familiar with these documents numerous questions come up.

One of them is "*Minutes of the Meeting of the Commission on Re-registration of Clan Community Holdings and Peasant Farms*" of 24 January 2000 from the Tura village. Agenda: "Investigation of economic activity and solution of the feasibility problem of forest plot allotments for reindeer herding ranges and game grounds to Clan Community and Farms specialising in reindeer herding and registered in the village of Yukta". Three farms have been assessed. For one of them, due to the absence of the State Tax Inspection registration, it is recommended that the Department of Registration and Licensing prepare liquidation documents, and the Committee of Land Resources and Land Planning prepare a draft decision for withdrawal of the plots. For two other farms, *Ayan* and *Eika*, re-registration was recommended.

On 23 June 2000 the following decree was issued for the *Ayan* farm:

Decree of 23 June 2000, No. 152

In accordance with land and forest legislation, on the decision of the District and Okrug Commission for Leasing of Game Grounds and Rangelands of 24.01.2000 and 10.05.2000, the Administration of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug

ORDERS THAT:

1. The land plot of 470162.0 ha from the reindeer herding farm *Ayan* allotted by the decision of the Ilimpiyskiy District administration of 21.05.91 for a long-term use as reindeer rangelands and game grounds shall be *withdrawn*.
2. **The State Act A-1 №405640** shall be considered invalid.
3. The manager of the farm Pëtr Kaplin shall hand in the state act for the use of land to the Committee for Land Resources and Land Planning of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug.
4. The Forest Management Board, EAO, shall allot, in due order, a forest plot to the *Ayan* farm for game grounds.

A.A. Bokovnikov
Okrug Governor

Let us try to clarify on what grounds the above decision was taken.

The premise section of the Decree refers to the land legislation of the Russian Federation (RF), but it is not stated which articles of the land and forest codes the present decree is based on. The decree refers to the resolutions of the District and Okrug commissions for lease of game grounds and reindeer rangelands of 24.01.2000 and 10.05.2000.

Let us see what the members of the commissions were guided by. The text of the *Minutes of the Meeting of Okrug Commission for the Lease of Game Grounds and Reindeer Rangelands* of 10.05.2000 in the Tura village, Evenk Autonomous Okrug, states that upon the proposals made in connection with "non-conformity of state acts and decisions of district administrations (concerning what?), it is necessary to prepare a decision of the administration to the effect that the above documents are invalid and shall be withdrawn". A decision has been taken: "The Committee for Land Resources and Land Planning in the Evenk Autonomous Okrug shall prepare a decision of the Governor on the abolition of the by-laws of the district administrations on allotment of game grounds and withdrawal land use acts issued previously by the Land Committee".

It is pointed out that "it is necessary to speed up the conveyance of the game grounds of the main land users, which are state farms". Thus, "with regard to the Production Association *Promyslovik*, the lease

documents are ready, but due to the existence of other claimants to the lease of game grounds of the Ilimpiyskiy Farm, a contest should be organised".

Subsequently, the Minutes states "in conformity with the Wildlife Law and Governor's Decree No 63 (title and date not indicated), the game grounds shall be handed over only to legal entities".

It remains unclear from the above documents what legal documents the members of the Commission and the Governor of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug are guided by as they take decisions on re-registration and withdrawal of reindeer rangelands and game grounds from indigenous people. The Governor refers to the decision of the Commission that was taken in conformity with the forest and land legislation. And, members of the Commission refer to the *Wildlife Law* without mentioning forest and land legislation and the Governor's Decree No 63. What is that decree about and when it was issued is unknown, but it follows from the minutes of the Commission meeting that it states the procedure for handing over game grounds for lease to legal entities alone. And how about the rights of individuals, including indigenous peoples employing traditional methods for protection and utilisation of wildlife as stated in articles 6, 48, 49 of the Federal *Wildlife Law*?

Let us look at the text of the federal *Wildlife Law* of 24 April 1995 (Legislation of the RF, 1995, No 1, article 1462):

Article 6. Authority of the bodies of state power of the administrative entities of the RF related to the protection and utilisation of wildlife

The authority of the bodies of state power of the administrative entities of the RF in protection and utilisation of wildlife include:

... Provision of the rights of indigenous people in the territories of their traditional distribution and economy.

Article 48. The right to use traditional methods of harvesting wildlife and products of animal activity

The citizens of the RF whose existence and income fully or partly rely on traditional systems of subsistence, including hunting, fishery and gathering, are entitled to the application of traditional methods harvesting of wildlife and animal activity products unless such methods result, whether directly or indirectly, in a decline of biological diversity, reduction of population or sustainable reproduction of wildlife, disturb wildlife habitats or is hazardous to humans.

The said right can be implemented both individually and collectively, through establishment of various associations (on the basis of families, clans, territorial-economic communities, unions of hunters, gatherers, etc.).

Article 49. The right to priority utilisation of wildlife

Citizens belonging to indigenous minorities and ethnic entities, whose original culture and way of life include traditional methods of protection and utilisation of wildlife, are entitled to priority utilisation of wildlife in traditional subsistence areas.

The right to priority utilisation of wildlife includes:

- Priority choice of game grounds by citizens belonging to population groups listed in part 1 of the present article and their associations;
- Benefits in relation to the dates and districts of wildlife harvest, age and sex composition, wildlife population numbers and animal activity products;
- Exceptional right to harvest definite species of wildlife and their activity products;
- Other types of utilisation of wildlife coordinated with specially authorised state bodies for protection, control and utilisation of wildlife and wildlife environment."

The law clearly states the special rights of indigenous minorities' wildlife utilisation, which can be implemented both individually and collectively. The law does not stipulate that members of indigenous people should represent "legal entities".

Further analysis of the Decree text reveals that paragraph 1 contains a well-defined injunction regarding "withdrawal of land plot of 470162.0 in the farm area", while paragraph 4 instructs that "... the farm should be allotted, in due procedure, as a forest plot for game grounds". Nobody knows what "due procedure" implies. This procedure has not been clarified. It is not understood what plot is implied and what size will be concerned with in future, since paragraph 4 does not give an indications of that. If this is re-registration, paragraph 4 should have stated the same plot of land of the same size and the terms on which it will be leased and for which period.

Comparison of the Decree text with the one of the recommendations of the Commission of 24.01.2000 on the *Ayan* farm demonstrates that the indigenous people's rights have been infringed upon.

The Commission recommends that the administration of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug should allot to the *Ayan* farm a forest plot for reindeer herding rangelands and game grounds.

By contrast, the Decree is only concerned with the plot of forest for game grounds, which implies that a decision has been taken not to allot land for reindeer herding ranges. If it is actually so, on what grounds has this decision been taken?

It follows from the other documents, including those sent from other regions, that game grounds and reindeer rangelands will be allotted only to "legal entities" and on a "contest basis". There are no guarantees that an indigenous hunter would receive a plot of his own. The terms of such "due procedure" contradict the statements of the above clauses of the Wildlife Law of the RF.

It would be natural to assume that if there are some statutory acts (which should not contradict the

federal Wildlife Law) regarding allotment of game grounds and reindeer rangelands to "legal entities", "clan communities" and "peasant farms" should be allowed time for re-registration in accordance with the new federal law *On General Principles of Clan Community Organisation...* signed by RF President on 20 July 2000 and which was put into force immediately upon its publication, that is, after the above-mentioned Minutes and the Decree.

Why such a hurry? In fact, the majority of state acts on the utilisation of game grounds and reindeer ranges for indigenous people issued in 1991 to 1992 have not expired. Moreover, a special instruction of the RF Ministry of Justice on the re-registration of farms of April 30, 1999 *Concerning the Instruction of RF Government of 22 04.1999 No. GK-PI-13491 GD* states directly that "neither the Federal Law *On the Introduction of the First Part of the Civil Code of RF* nor any other federal laws establish deadlines for bringing the legal status of farms in conformity with the RF Civil Code. Today, work is being done on the development of a new federal law *On Farms*, which can determine the above-mentioned dates"

S.N. Kharyuchi, President of the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, addressed the bodies of power of the RF demanding the legal assessment of the on-going re-registration of game grounds and reindeer ranges assigned to "clan communities" and farms of indigenous minorities and some northern administrative entities of the RF.

So far, we are calling upon the indigenous minorities of the North to forward information to RAIPON on similar facts of re-registration and withdrawal of game grounds from indigenous peoples of the North, supplementing appropriate documents and also to file respective complaints to the Prosecutor's Office of the Administrative entities of the RF, to the Procurator General of the RF.

A draft collective letter by citizens regarding the above events in the Evenk Autonomous Okrug is presented below.

President of the Russian Federation
4, Staraya Ploshchad 103132

Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation
2, Krasnopresnenskaya Naberezhnaya, 103274

Minister of Justice of the Russian Federation
4, Voronotsovo Pole, Moscow, 109830

Procurator General of the Russian Federation
15a, Bolshaya Dmitrovka, Moscow, 103797

copy: V.V. Botul, Prosecutor of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug
2 Sovetskaya, village Tura, Evenk Autonomous Okrug, Krasnoyarskiy Kray, 648000

copy: A.A. Bokovmikov Governor of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug.
2 Smidovicha, village Tura, Evenk Autonomous Okrug, Krasnoyarskiy Kray, 648000

COLLECTIVE APPEAL

On the basis of Article 33, RF Constitution

(Citizens of the Russian Federation are entitled to address personally, and also to forward individual or collective appeals to state bodies and bodies of local administration.)

A demand for immediate suspension of the operation of all statutory acts issued by the state bodies of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug, RF on withdrawal of game grounds and other lands, which are territories of traditional subsistence and historical environment of the indigenous peoples of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug.

This is to inform you that in the territory of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug (hereafter referred to as EAO) the constitutional rights of representatives of indigenous minorities, whom the administration has put on the verge on extinction, are violated. Actions and decisions of the EAO authorities violate the Constitution of the RF and Federal Law.

RF Constitution

Article 2

The human being, his/her rights and freedom are the highest value. Recognition, observance and protection of the rights and freedom of the human being and the citizen are the obligations of the state.

Article 3, § 1

The carrier of sovereignty and the only source of power in the RF is its multinational people.

Article 7, § 1

The RF is a social state, whose policy is aimed at creating conditions providing a dignified life and free development of the people.

Article 9, § 1

Land and other natural resources are used and protected in the RF to form a basis for human life and activities in the respective territory.

Article 15, § 1

The Constitution of the RF has the highest legal status and is applied throughout the entire territory of the RF. Laws and other legal acts adopted in the RF shall not contradict the Constitution of the RF.

Article 16, § 2

No other article of the present Constitution may contradict the foundations of the constitutional system of the RF.

Article 18

The rights and freedom of the people and the citizens are the following. They determine the meaning, content and application of the laws, the actions of the legislator, the executive power, and the local legislation and are supported by justice.

Article 20, § 1

Everybody has the right to live.

Article 69

The RF guarantees the rights of indigenous minorities in the RF in accordance with the generally accepted principles and standards of the international law and international treaties of the RF.

Article 72

The joint authority of the RF and the administrative entities of the RF comprises:

... b) Protection of human and citizens' rights; protection of the rights of ethnic minorities

... l) Protection of the historical environment and traditional lifestyles of ethnic minorities ..."

The above articles of the RF Constitution guarantee the indigenous peoples of the RF the right to life and freely develop as the human being.

What is going on in EAO today is a violation of the constitutional rights of the indigenous minorities of the RF

During the period proclaimed by the UN General Assembly as the decade of indigenous peoples of the world, the bodies of state power of the EAO take decisions aimed at withdrawal of traditional lands and environment from indigenous people

The EAO Governor issues decrees on withdrawal of land plots that are sites of traditional subsistence practices of the indigenous people, i.e. hunting, reindeer herding, fishing and gathering. For centuries, those types of activity have been the prerequisite for the existence of all indigenous people living in Russia. It is exactly traditional subsistence that provides the basis of life of the indigenous minorities of the North.

During recent years of economic crisis, when the organised import of goods has been practically discontinued, only traditional subsistence ensures survival of the majority of indigenous people living far from built-up areas, where transportation is only possible by air.

Our right to traditional lifestyle has been stated by the Federal Law.

The federal law *On Guarantees for Indigenous Peoples of the RF*: In accordance with the generally adopted principles and standards of international law and international treaties, the RF establishes the legal foundations of the guarantees of original socio-economic and cultural development of its indigenous minorities, protection of their traditional environment, traditional lifestyle and economy. The rights of indigenous minorities are also protected by other federal laws, in particular, the *Wildlife Law*, articles 6, 48, 49, *RF Forest Code*, articles 107 and 124, and the *Land Code*, articles 4, 5, 14, 15, 21, 94, *On Land Rent*, articles 12, 13.

In defiance of the requirements of RF Constitution, the standards of international law and federal legislation of the RF, the EAO Governor and EAO bodies of state power have launched a massive campaign for withdrawal of land plots that are territories of traditional land use and historic traditional environment of the indigenous population of the EAO.

The present appeal is supplemented with a copy of the decree by the Administration of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug No. 152 of 23 June 2000 and a copy of the Minutes No. 1 of 10 May 2000 of the meeting of the Okrug Commission for Leasing Game Grounds and Reindeer Rangelands (village Tura).

Both documents are – legally seen – absolutely invalid. They lack any concrete articles of federal law that would entitle the administration to withdrawal of areas of traditional land use from the EAO indigenous population.

The above statutes are in sheer defiance of the articles 2, 7, 9, 15, 16, §§ 2, 18, 20, 69 of the RF, and also the articles of the federal law *On Guarantees of the Rights of the Ethnic Minorities of the RF*.

In response to the appeals of indigenous representatives and associations of indigenous minorities, the EAO administration came up with no intelligible legal arguments. The only document that was received was the letter by S. Yudushkin, Deputy Minister of Justice of the RF, regarding the instruction of the RF Government of 22.04.99, No. GK-P1-13491 GD. This letter implies that the question of re-registration of farms has nothing to do with the issue of withdrawal of traditional subsistence territories from indigenous peoples. The given letter contains no legal norms associated with the right of indigenous minorities to traditional lifestyle.

Thus, the actions and decrees of the EAO Governor are excess of authority, violating federal law and the RF Constitution. The implementation of acts aimed at withdrawal of traditional subsistence territories from the EAO indigenous population may entail tragic consequences for a large number of people, who are largely members of poor families with many children.

We demand that immediate measures should be taken to stop arbitrariness on the part of the EAO Governor regarding withdrawal of lands, which are the basis of traditional subsistence and historical environment of indigenous minorities.

In case no immediate measures are taken to stop this arbitrariness, we shall have to approach international human rights organisations and the United Nations.

Signatures to this appeal are collected throughout the entire Russian Federation.

Supplement:

1. Copy of Minutes No. 1 of meeting of the Okrug Commission for Leasing Game Grounds and Reindeer Rangelands (Tura village) of 10 May 2000 – 2 sheets.
2. Decree of the Governor of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug No. 152 of 23 June 2000. – 1 sheet.
3. Copy of the letter by RF Deputy Minister of Justice, S. Yudushkin, regarding the instruction of the RF Government of 22 April 1999, No GK-P1-13491GD – 2 sheets.
4. Copy of the letter of the Association of Clan Communities and Farms *Ilimpeya* to the head of the administration of the Ilimpeya Rayon N.A. Supryaga – 2 sheets.
5. Copy of the statement by M.D. Smirnova, President of the Association of Indigenous Minorities of the North *Arun* (Revival) of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug to V.V. Botul – 2 sheets.
6. Copy of the letter by the President of the Association of Indigenous Minorities of the North *Arun* of the Evenk Autonomous Okrug, M.D. Smirnova, of 09 October 2000 to the President of the Association of Indigenous Minorities of the North, S.N. Kharyuchi – 2 sheets.

With an axe against LUKoil

O. Moldanova, Information centre, "Yugra Rescue" Association

<i>At midday</i>	<i>-Wait,</i>
<i>A young reindeer</i>	<i>Do not drink it, son</i>
<i>Leaned over the stream.</i>	<i>Wait a bit more.</i>
<i>He asked</i>	<i>The stream smells of oil,</i>
<i>It's so hot, mum,</i>	<i>You'll get poisoned.</i>
<i>I'll drink from the stream.</i>	<i>(Yuriy Vella, "White shouts")</i>

The three last weeks have witnessed a conflict in the Surgutski region of the Khanty-Mansiyskiy Autonomous Okrug between a famous Nenets poet and writer, Yuriy Kylevich Ayvaseda (Vella), and LUKoil-Western Siberia.

On September the 14th, 2000, Yuriy Ayvaseda and his family and visitors from France and Estonia were on their way from his tribal land in the village of Variegan to meet a friend from the school of Variegan. Approaching the bridge across the river Khapleuta - the only road connecting the indigenous reindeer herders with the settlement, Mr Ayvaseda discovered the workers of LUKoil - Western Siberia dismantling the bridge with a digger. Yuriy Kylevich wanted to see the papers for the work; his request was ignored, as well as a request to contact the law enforcement agencies to settle the dispute. To stop the destruction of the bridge, Yuriy Ayvaseda destroyed the wheels of the digger with an axe.

LUKoil - Western Siberia filed a claim to the owner of the tribal land, simultaneously trying to use the mass media to portray a well-known public figure as a criminal and the Khanty people (though no Khanty were involved in the story) as militant hooligans. Yuriy Ayvaseda is currently preparing a legal

case. Mr Ayvaseda is protected by the "Yugra Rescue" Association, and by the Association of the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation. It is yet to be known whose side the law will take.

The real reason of the conflict, in our view, does not lie in the damaged wheels or in the dismantled bridge. This is just an occasion for the next eruption of the deeply rooted conflict between the indigenous population of the Okrug and the extractors of subsoil resources.

The policy of governmental patronage was employed with respect to indigenous people not only in Russia, but all over the world, for a long time. How to live, what to do, how and what the children should have been taught—all these matters were decided by the state with no reference to the people. Recent years have witnessed an emerging principle of partnership, and the establishment of contractual relations with the indigenous peoples, including economic rights, internationally.

The traditional forms of management have the same right to exist as oil companies. This is not reality. The current legislation gives priorities back to the users of subsoil resources, on clear grounds. The

country lives from the sale of natural resources. The budget of the Khanty-Mansiyskiy Autonomous Okrug – an okrug that donates rather than receives money from the federal budget – is based on oil revenues. This is at the root of the problems regarding the rights of the indigenous inhabitants of the Okrug, as proclaimed for all Russia's indigenous peoples in the Law "On guarantees of the rights of the indigenous minorities of Russian Federation". None of the indigenous owners, including Yuriy Kylevich Ayvaseda, of the tribal lands in Khanty-Mansiyskiy Autonomous Okrug possess title deeds to the land. Adoption of the Law "On territories of traditional use of natural resources" could partly relieve the tension in the Okrug. However, the draft of the law has been 'travelling' from one office to another for the last three years. As Tatyana Gogoleva, the local MP and the President of the "Yugra Rescue" Association says, no other bill in the Okrug has undergone so many adjustments in these offices. Still it has not been accepted even as a draft version. So one dimension of the conflict emerged in the form of the owner of the tribal land damaging a digger with an axe. The act was rooted in the struggle for the right to live on the land of one's ancestors, to be engaged in traditional crafts, to care for the rivers and lakes, and to preserve the land for one's descendants.

There is yet another aspect to the problem. On January 14, 2001, elections in the local Duma of Khanty-Mansiyskiy Autonomous Okrug will be held. The charter of the Okrug stipulates indigenous representation (an Indigenous Assembly) in the Duma. The Assembly last gathered in 1997. However, guidelines for the formation for the Assembly are not quite clear,

and of the elected deputies only two represent Khanty and Mansi, while four represent the interests of the "oil" cities (Surgut, Nizhnevartovsk, Megion) with very few indigenous inhabitants.

In April 2000, the MPs adopted a law that requires candidates for the Assembly to be put forward by the congress of the indigenous peoples in the Okrug. Thus, chances to enter the Duma increase for the indigenous representatives. This does not suit some MPs who do not want to part with their places in the Duma. The initiatives to permit independent candidates to the Assembly was put forward by Mr Ts. D. Ogulchanskiy (Surgut) and V. Grebenniukov (Nizhnevartovsk). Should the initiative win support in the Duma, these MPs' deputies as representatives of the indigenous minorities will continue their efforts to protect indigenous interests in the next Duma. However, at the extraordinary meeting on October 5, the current Duma left the law without amendments.

This decision has hardly satisfied the representatives of certain circles and structures who want to have "puppet" MPs. Therefore, through the controlled mass media they started a campaign to discredit the indigenous peoples in the Okrug together with their leaders. After the scandal with Yuriy Ayvaseda, the next target of LUKoil was Tatyana Gogoleva. The company's executives wrote an angry letter to the TV Yugra and to the Chairman of the Duma in Khanty-Mansiyskiy Autonomous Okrug, where they accused Ms Gogoleva of damaging the business reputation of LUKoil in the comment Ms Gogoleva made to a programme produced by Infoservice. They ask for an adequate assessment to the activities of the MP. Who will be next?

From the editors of "Mir korenykh narodov":

The Association of the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation (RAIPON) received information on the incident with Mr Ayvaseda from Natalya Novikova, "Rodnik" Legal Centre. On October 5th, RAIPON addressed in Prosecutor Office of Khanty-Mansiyskiy Autonomous Okrug, Mr A.V. Filipenko, the Governor of the Khanty-Mansiyskiy Autonomous Okrug, Ms A.V.

Sarychev, the Head of Administration in Surgutski region, Mr G.O. Gref, the Minister for economic development and trade of the Russian Federation, Mr A.V. Blokhin, the Minister on federative, ethnic and migrational policy, and Mr B.A. Yatskevitch, the Minister for Natural Resources of the Russian Federation, with the following letter:

"Application

by Article 33, the Constitution of the Russian Federation 'On violations of the rights of the indigenous peoples in the Khanty-Mansiyskiy Autonomous Okrug'

The Association of the Indigenous Minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation expresses deep concern regarding the work of LUKoil - Western Siberia Ltd. in the Surgut region.

In 1998, the company unilaterally denounced economic agreements made with the heads of indigenous families in Surgut region, according to the law of the Khanty-Mansiyskiy Autonomous Okrug, 'On use of subsoils'. However, the company continued its industrial activities on the traditional lands. On September the 14th, 2000, the employees of this company deliberately employed a digging machine to

destroy a bridge connecting reindeer herders' working places with the village of Variegan. An attempt to stop the destruction of the bridge by Yuriy Ayvaseda and his requests to view permits for this work brought no result. The road through this bridge was the only means for the indigenous population to contact the rest of the world, to receive medical aid, to deliver products, to address governmental agencies, and to drive children to school. Protecting these vital rights guaranteed by the Russian Constitution, Mr Yuriy Ayvaseda, acting in the self-defence of his people, destroyed wheels of a digger with an axe.

According to Article 2 of the Russian Constitution, the rights and freedom of a human being are of the highest value. Article 20 of the Russian Constitution guarantees the right to life. Article 12 of the Russian Civil code provides citizens with an opportunity to act in self-defence to protect these rights.

Mr Yuriy Ayvaseda protected his rights and the interests of the community, supported by the law. He acted in self-defence; Article 37 of the Russian Criminal Code allows it.

We would like to attract your attention to the violation of the rights and lawful interests of the indigenous minorities of the North. Oil Company LUKoil Western Siberia perpetrated these violations.

We ask you to inspect the above facts and to ensure no further violations take place in the rights of the indigenous minorities of the North and of communal interests. We ask you to ensure Mr Yuriy Ayvaseda does not suffer criminal responsibility for his actions within boundaries of the law.

Yours faithfully,
S.N. Kharyuchi
President of RAIPON"

In respect to this publication, RAIPON received letter of support from RAIPON of Sakhalinskaya Oblast, RAIPON of Khabarovskiy Kray, participants to the workshop "Protection of indigenous rights in Sakhalin and the traditional way of life" (November, 1-7, 2000, village of Noglinki in Sakhalinskaya oblast), in total more than 30 letters.

The information on struggle for the rights of the indigenous peoples on protection of a traditional way of life and traditional abodes against illegal actions of LUKoil - Western Siberia is published on Internet at RAIPON's site (<http://www.raipon.org>). You may address your letters of support to RAIPON Russia, to

our magazine, and to the mentioned governmental officials directly.

Ms E. Grechushkina, the lawyer to Mr Ayvaseda, informed us on the 16th October that in the criminal case under Article 'Hooligan acts', all participants to the event are attracted as witnesses, and nobody was charged.

The friends of Yuriy Ayvaseda are convinced that his actions are not criminal and that the case should be closed, while the constitutional rights of the indigenous minorities of the North to preserve their traditional ways of life, in their traditional areas of residence in Khanty-Mansiyskiy Autonomous Okrug, should be protected.

Economic agreements between indigenous communities and industry in Khanty-Mansiyskiy Autonomous Okrug: a legal assessment

Aleksandr Veselov, Executive director, Ekoyuris Institute

In the framework of the project on legal protection for the indigenous territories of the Khanty in the Surgut region, Khanty-Mansiyskiy Autonomous Okrug (KhMAO), the indigenous communities, the owners of indigenous lands, and the local authority in the Surgut region provided lawyers of the Ekoyuris Institute with copies of economic agreements. The indigenous communities and the Khanty families enter into the agreements with oil companies and other industrial companies of various forms of ownership. Sometimes the local authorities enter into these agreements on behalf of the local population.

The subject of the agreements is the right for industrial development of the lands attributed to the indigenous population.

I will assess one of these economic agreements here. The parties to the agreement are the head of the indigenous community and the Director General of Tomskneftegasgeologiya Ltd. The following gaps were observed in the text of the agreement:

- The place where the agreement was done is not specified;
- The signatures have different dates;
- The general part of the document does not specify the basis for the agreement of the indigenous community (indications to relevant parts of the Charter of the indigenous community);
- The document does not express specifically the subject of the agreement, obligations and responsibilities of the parties, conditions for implementation, amend-

ments and denunciation of the agreement. Legal addresses and bank details of the parties are not specified. The term of the agreement is not specified.

- The document does not specify witnesses to the signatories. There is a signature, though of an unknown person, likely to be an official of the local authority;
- An additional clause states that Tomskneftegas-geologiya Ltd. will transfer 200 million roubles to the account of the indigenous community. However no term of transfer is specified; a copy of a budget for this amount and a protocol of the agreement on the contractual price are not attached;
- The style of the text is colloquial, it is not legal. The document contains stylistic and spelling errors.

The subject of this agreement is the consent to temporary use of the land (28 ha) for industrial development, limited by the term of the license. Registration numbers and the date of issue for the license are not specified. The license has been issued by the Regional Geological Office to drill a test borehole type R-3 in Yuzhno-Makhninsk. Further, the agreement provides the consent of the parties to the plan of transportation of the industrial equipment, as well as the layout of the selected site.

The responsibilities of the geologists are mentioned. However, they are formulated in general terms only. No exact definitions are provided. For example, the company agrees to provide transport should members of the indigenous community need medical treatment. However, the types of transport, its availability, and the passenger capacity are not specified. It is not explicitly stated that the transport is granted free of charge.

Article 6 of the agreement defines "the transfer of the dwelling on the site to be used permanently free of charge". If the agreement defines the transfer free of charge, the term 'transfer of ownership' should be used. Then the word 'permanent use' makes no sense. The process of transfer should be specified.

Article 7 is formulated absolutely illiterately and contains such unclear phrases as, "... allocates... the goods..." and "... for delivery of native plants...".

Article 8 provides the leader of the indigenous community with the right to address the officials of the Surgutski local authority or a court if the agreement is violated. The local authority does not have the legal powers to resolve disputes and may not apply any sanctions in this case, since local authorities are not mentioned in the list of dispute-resolving governmental agencies in Article 11 of the Civil Code. Thus the Russian legislation does not provide the rights to appeal to local authorities in such disputes. A court cannot consider a dispute of this nature since according to Article 25 of the Civil Code and Article 22 of the Arbitration Code such disputes fall into the field of an arbitration court.

Article 9 provides for a reconsideration of the Agreement (but not its parts) by "a demand of the parties".

This formulation makes no sense, words 'as agreed by the parties' have to be applied.

The requirement of the local administration to present a report on the use of the amount of 200 million roubles given to the community is in a contradiction with Article 154 of the Civil Code, as the Agreement is considered to be a two-party transaction, as so stated in the General Part of the Agreement. Hence, a third party – the local administration – has no right to make any conditions on this transaction.

The will of the parties to achieve juridical results may be expressed in any form.

The form of the transaction has legal significance for the underlying activity, for the definition of its content, and for proof of rights and duties of the parties should a dispute arise (Civil Code, Article 158). Here, the transaction between two parties was made in writing. It concerns land use rights. According to Articles 164 and 131 of the Civil Code, such transaction requires registration by the relevant governmental agencies.

The form of this transaction defines it as an 'economic agreement'. The existing legislation does not recognise it as a legal transaction.

The agreement does not specify conditions for implementation of most responsibilities of the company. According to Article 309 of the Civil Code, the responsibilities should be implemented according to the conditions of the Agreement and the requirements of the law. The comment to the Article specifies that in case of insufficiency or ambiguity of conditions of the responsibilities, the implementation has to follow requirements of the law. However the Russian federal and regional legislations do not regulate the affairs related to industrial development of tribal lands.

The rights and the responsibilities of the parties arise from the contracts or other transactions permits by the legislation or not contradicting the legislation (Articles 8 and 307 of the Civil Code). An 'economic agreement' as a transaction is not stipulated by the law or by any other legal standard.

Article 422 of the Civil Code states that a contract should meet the imperative norms of the legislation valid at the moment of the contract's conclusion. The examined document does not meet the requirements of the Act on the status of indigenous territories in KhMAO (in force from April the 5th, 1992 by the KhMAO Local Parliament). This Act (Articles 20-22) defines the following with respect to the use of tribal lands for industrial research:

- A contract with the owner of the tribal land that specifies the methods and the temporal terms of the work, as well as reconstruction of the land to a state suitable for its original use, the number and sittings of temporary constructions on the land, the responsibilities for indemnification of losses incurred by the owner of the tribal land, special rules on conduct of research that take into account the features of natural resources on the land in question etc. These are the important conditions in a contract;

- Terms and amounts of payments for the use of the land, responsibilities on recultivation and indemnification are determined by the local authority with the consent of the owner of the tribal land;
- The contract with the owner of the tribal land is registered by the local authority that issues a permit to conduct works on the tribal land.

Clearly, the particular transaction assessed here does not meet the requirements of the Act. The 'economic agreement' does not include obligatory and essential conditions. The procedure for conclusion of a contract was not followed. The similar requirements are applied when land is allocated to industrial development, with additional essential conditions. Article 22 of the Act states that in the absence of a contract with all above conditions or in default of its registration, the industrial development may not take place and the contract is deemed void.

Further, the Act requires an enterprise to receive consent of the landlord in a separate, formless document of a free form after the contract was concluded. This requirement is virtually ignored in Surgut region.

The consent of the owner is in the 'economic agreement', and is a subject of the transaction. This contradicts requirements of the Act.

Thus, the agreement violates the requirements in Article 422, part 1, of the Civil Code (it does not meet the legal rules for the parties) and Article 434, part 1 (the form of the contract required by law is not observed).

The agreement does not state grounds for amendments and denunciation; this violates requirements of Article 450 of the Civil Code.

Further, the Act states that consent is given and the community enters into the contract. According to the charter of the community, the chairman of the community cannot give consent to industrial development of tribal land or sign any agreements that provide for such a content without appropriate decisions taken at a meeting of the members to the community. In the agreement, there is no reference to the consent by the community or representation of this question to the chairman. Thus, a non-authorized person (Civil Code, Article 183) entered into the transaction. According to the law, rights and responsibilities, including any property-related responsibilities, in the transaction belong to the third party, i.e. the enterprise.

Since the legislation requires governmental registration of land-related transactions, especially the tribal land (Civil Code, Article 164), 'the economic agreements', entered into by the chairman of the community and the enterprises and organisations with regard to prospecting or industrial development of the tribal land have to be deemed invalid, according to the Civil Code, Article 165, part 1. The imperative may be applied to the 'the economic agreements' of Article 168 of the Code. The Article defines a transaction as invalid if it does not follow legal requirements. The managers of the company and of the organisations who entered into the 'the economic agreements' with

the chairman of the indigenous community surely knew the legal requirements on industrial development of tribal land, the transaction may be challenged, by Civil Law, Article 174, as the chairman left the community.

Another possibility is 'to deem the transaction invalid as entered into because of ignorance' (Article 178, Civil Code), since the will of the chairman expressed in the 'agreement' was not based on full knowledge regarding the real amount of damage to be incurred by the community as a result of prospecting on tribal lands. Neither the company nor the local authority presented any calculations on environmental and economic damage to the community, not even a State of the Environment Report on this or other projects.

The above remarks are applicable to other examined agreements between indigenous communities and family leaders, on one hand, and industrial structures, on the other hand.

It is necessary to note that Article 3 of the federal law "On the governmental regulation of the socio-economic development in North Russia" (June 19, 1996) specifies preservation and development of the indigenous peoples of the North and protection of traditional way of life of the indigenous minorities, as principles for governmental policy. Similar requirements are established by the federal law "On guarantees of the rights of the indigenous minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation".

In the framework of this law, the law of KhMAO "On land" of May 28, 1998, gives the indigenous population a priority for land to be used to maintain a traditional way of life, for rational use of land as a natural resource, and as a basis for subsistence. Article 77 of this law places obligatory responsibilities for indemnification of damage incurred by the owner of the tribal land. Article 43 provides a new regulatory regime for remit of tribal land gratis in the form of inherited possession and termless use for indigenous inhabitants who maintain a traditional way of life. Article 50 places responsibility on the subsoil users to co-ordinate permit conditions with the owner of tribal land. But the new law does not state the necessity of agreements between the enterprises and indigenous community or individual owners of the tribal land for industrial development.

The law "On land" has in fact cancelled out Articles 104 and 105 of the KhMAO Law 'On use of subsoils', April 9, 1996, that gave a detailed regulation for attribution of land to industrial development, including agreement with the owners of tribal land. However these rules may be used to challenge agreements, entered into after this law went into force. Here, a very important condition is stipulated in Article 108 on determination of damage to the tribal land as a result of subsoil development and the construction of buildings, and on the establishment of expert groups to assess the damage.

The responsibility to develop a mechanism of indemnification for the use of natural resources and for the damage to the environment in indigenous traditional abodes is placed on the okrug authorities by the Charter of KhMAO of April 26, 1995 (Article 18).

CONCLUSIONS:

1. The 'economic agreements' concluded in the Surgut region that contain agreements for attribution of tribal land to industrial development have to be

deemed void on account of a series of reasons, explained above.

2. When filing claims to courts on deeming these transactions invalid, it is feasible to raise the issue of deeming void permits for the use of subsoil within the borders of tribal lands.

3. In the governmental acts, a form and procedures for economic agreements have to be addressed, with calculations on indemnification to the owners of tribal land.

NB: The examination of the documents mentioned in this report was done in 1999. At present, the practice of agreements in the KhMAO meets the current legislation to a greater extent. However, in other regions of the North, Siberia and Far East, the mechanism for conclusion of such transactions is not in place.

Non-governmental structure of centres concerned with the protection of indigenous rights on traditional use of natural resources is in formation

In 1998, the non-governmental organisation for environmental and legal problems, "Ekoyuris", started to develop a new direction - protection of rights of the indigenous peoples on traditional use of natural resources. There were no practising lawyers in Russia with expertise on this part of legislation and with experience of this legislation in judicial practice.

When analysing the Russian normative base, we found out that this part of legislation needs to be developed at the federal and the regional levels. Many rights to a traditional way of life of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East have a declarational nature, though stipulated in the law. There is no regulation to apply these laws in practice and there is no supervision of implementation of the 1999 law "On guarantees of the rights to the indigenous minorities of Russia". Low legal awareness among the indigenous population aggravates the situation.

These problems are being exhibited in industrial development of land under traditional use, that is in the development of ore and coal deposits in Siberia, oil and gas deposits in the Far East and in the North, deposits of gold and diamonds in Yakutiya. The productivity of traditional hunting, fishing and reindeer herding grounds is negatively impacted, as the environment is significantly damaged. Families the Khanty, the Mansi, the Shors, the Nenets and other indigenous people have to leave the graves of the ancestors and places of their birth; they have to leave the land that fed these people for a long time.

Environmental protection of the North, Siberia and the Far East is important to the indigenous people in these regions. The natural resources are the basis of their life, an indispensable condition for preservation of their unique cultures.

With financial support from the MacArthur Foundation, the Ekoyuris Institute began implementation of a program on protection of rights of these peoples regarding traditional use of natural resources. The

base regions for the project became the Khanty-Mansiyskiy Autonomous Okrug, the Far East, and Western Siberia. With direct participation of the lawyers in Ekoyuris, programs of legislative development were initiated in KhMAO, a feasibility study was conducted in the Yuganskiy Nature Park in the Surgut region to establish a biospheric testing ground with functional zones for life subsistence of the local indigenous community Yaun-Yaks (the River People), and two Board sessions with the Deputy Governor of the okrug addressed problems of the indigenous peoples. Ongoing consulting is rendered to the representatives of the Khanty, the Mansi, and the forest Nenets, as well as to the local authorities in the okrug and in its regions. With assistance of the okrug's administration, an environmental and legal centre for the problems of the indigenous minorities was opened. In workshops and meetings with lawyers of Ekoyuris, an environmental and legal centre was set up in Sakhalin financed by the 'Network of the Sacred Earth'. Its first case was a public investigation in mass destruction of herring in the Piltun gulf in 1999. Legal aid was rendered to the case on protection of indigenous rights of the Ketnivgun tribe.

In order to train lawyers on problems regarding the traditional use of natural resources, a project was initiated as two month training module (Phase 1) where two young lawyers from Khanty-Mansiysk and Kemerovo area were trained in Moscow from June 21st to August 21st.

The project included consultation with Mr V.A. Kriazhkov, PhD (Law), a leading legal expert in this field and an advisor to the Constitutional Court, and with Ms O.A. Murashko, a known ethnographer; it also included work in the Ministry on Federative and Ethnic Policy, in the Committee on Ethnic Policy in the State Duma, and in RAIPON. The project covered participation in parliamentary hearings, workshops and conferences, the activities of a consultation cen-

tre, and a study of the legal base in Ekoyuris, as well as experience sharing with Russian environmental lawyers who work for NGOs. The participants took part in an actual legal case in a court of law.

The results of the project were two dissertations accepted by the examiners, "Accounting for the rights of the indigenous minorities with respect to industrial development of territories under traditional use of natural resources. Case study of the Shores" (by A. Sevostianova) and "The Legal status of a territory

with traditional use of natural resources in the legislation of the Russian Federation" (by P. Salavatov). Further, a legal centre is being established in Novokuznetsk with support of the Information Environmental Agency and RAIPON.

At present, the Ekoyuris Institute has announced a tender for the second round of training, to be carried out in October - November 2000. The information may be obtained from A.K. Veselov via e-mail: asel@online.ru; Ekoyuris@glasnet.ru.

The Udege are forest people, and they protect their forest

Pavel Sulyandziga, Thomas Köhler & Olga Murashko

Krasnyy Yar is the most beautiful village on the Bikin River, tributary of the Ussuri River. The village is home predominantly to the Udege, as well as a small number of Nanai and Russians. The first to meet us at Bikin were giant, blue, subtropical butterflies with a wing span of no less than 20 cm. We had already learned from our museum excursion and from our companion Alexander Panichev, ecologist and brilliant expert in local nature, that we were in the unique Ussuri taiga, where the subtropics encounter the sub-Arctic. The Bikin forests are a still intact tract of the Ussuri taiga, where some rare, relict species of flora and fauna have remained. The Bikin River provides habitat for most rare leatherback turtles; and the forest, for Ussuri tigers, Siberian stags, unique species of deciduous and coniferous trees, ginseng and other medicinal plants.

The Udege are traditionally engaged in hunting, gathering and fishing. The forest is the source of their life.

And that explains why they protect their forest. Recently, they have had to guard their forest increasingly often from people who want to make a fast buck lumbering the Siberian pine, yew, and other commercially important tree species abundant in the Bikin taiga.

The last 30 km stretch of the way to Krasnyy Yar is a recently constructed road. The local people refer to it as "a road to nowhere", it being an unfinished military road. The road is lined with dead trees. Ill-designed construction caused the road to be flooded. Subsequently, the road was handed over to civilian authorities, and then construction was suspended for lack of financing. In 1997, some allocations were obtained in the form of World Bank loans, but after the Udege filed an appeal claiming violation of the World Bank's Operative Instruction 4.20 on the rights of indigenous peoples, the construction of the road was terminated.

But that was not the first the indigenous people of Krasnyy Yar had experienced in protecting the forests. They know that destruction of the forest and dry-

ing up of the river would eliminate the unique natural world and the ancient culture of the people living there.

The first experience of protection of Bikin forests taught Krasnyy Yar indigenous people a lot.

The Udege learnt about forest felling in the zone of the Bikin River in 1989. Then, timbermen, jointly with the gigantic South Korean company Heundai, promised the indigenous people compensation and welfare payments if they agreed to the felling of the forest. But the indigenous people of the Ussuri taiga were aware that with the loss of the forest they would not only lose the source of their subsistence, but also their native lands and their culture. The indigenous people turned to the administration of the Primorskiy Kray, but they were not supported. Then their appeal to protect the unique forests of Bikin was seconded by residents of the Primorskiy Kray, Ussuri Cossacks, international environmentalist and human rights organizations. The joint effort of indigenous people and old-timers of Bikin and the entire Primorskiy Kray, and also international organizations, has received much attention. As a result, a state commission was established which declared that the project was illegal. The ecological expert opinion was negative and the felling in that region was banned.

Currently, the unique forests of Bikin have attracted the attention of the Primorskie Lesopromyshlenniki Company (Director General V.I. Doroshenko). The first stage of their project is the construction of a road to the upper reaches of the Bikin River where the sacred sources of the river are located. If the forest is cut down in the upper reaches of the river, the river will dry up, and the entire unique natural world and the ancient culture of the local residents will disappear.

The local people are aware of that, and, hence, the first thing that we saw in Krasnyy Yar was a meeting of its residents, where we were read a letter calling upon the administration of the Kray and the public to protect the Bikin forest.

The old story is repeated. Promises and threats are voiced again, and again decisions are prepared secretly from the public. And again the indigenous people and local residents of Bikin come out to protect

their forests. They addressed the following letter to their governor, the district administration, and the management of Primorskie Lesopromyshlenniki Company:

Mr. E.I. Nazdratenko, Governor of the Primorskiy Kray
Copy: Mr. V.I. Doroshenko, Head of the Administration of Pozharskiy District
Mr. K.G. Voitseshevskiy, Director General of the Primorskie Lesopromyshlenniki Company

Dear Evgeny Ivanovich,

It has become known to us that the Primorskie Lesopromyshlenniki Company continues to seek permission for the construction of a highway from the upper reaches of the Svetlaya River to the upper reaches of the Edinka River with frequent passage through the territory of the Bikin River basin. We have already twice expressed our negative attitude toward the construction of any highway opening access to the forest's raw material resources. In February this year, in response to our appeal to the Kray administration, we received a letter from the acting Governor V.S. Dubinin. The letter advised that 'solution to the problem of the construction of a timber road is vested in the Primorie Forestry Management Board', and, hence, the opinion of indigenous people is allegedly not valid.

The meeting of Krasnyy Yar residents addressed the problem of the construction of this highway once again. We cannot agree with the arguments of Mr. Dubinin. The ecological assessment in which we were not participants would not convince us either. We are confident that the highway to the upper reaches of Bikin is of real danger to the welfare of the entire basin's ecosystem, mainly through uncontrolled human access to the forests, which sharply increases the probability of fire and poaching. For an actual example of what can happen, look at the Tayezhny mine in the Bolshaya Ussurka basin. Some time ago this was an area of age-old taiga, but today there are nothing but fire clearings there. In addition, the planned highway would cross some unique landscapes which provide habitat to virtually the last Primorie colonies of the Siberian capercaillie (a rare species of wood-grouse) and the hooded crane.

Once again we ask you to heed our concern. Please do not take any rush decisions that may have such a heavy impact on the Bikin taiga, which we rely upon for subsistence. We have nothing left but to stand by our native territory to the end.

Residents of the Krasnyy Yar village.
5 July 2000.

The editorial office of the magazine *Indigenous Peoples' World – Living Arctic* will follow the development of the situation and support the population of the Bikin River in their struggle for the conservation of the environment. All those willing to support Bikin residents should address the editorial offices of the magazine:

Editorial Board
Indigenous Peoples' World, RAIPON
Office 527, Prospect Vernadskogo 37/2
117415 Moscow Russia

RAIPON's first information centre in Kamchatka

N. Zaporotskaya

In order to expand its regional activities, the Russian Association of the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East (RAIPON) decided to establish information centres on environmental protection and the protection of indigenous rights. Thus, bilateral information flows will be established between the central office in Moscow and RAIPON's grass roots organisations.

One information centre will be established in Kamchatka in 2001. The preparations are underway.

The centre will receive and distribute information from RAIPON's central office, and will collect information locally to submit back to Moscow. For the collected information, RAIPON rented a publishing space - a page - in the newspaper *Aborigen Kamchatki*. The project envisages a network of local correspondents in the indigenous villages, with three so far.

The project was proposed in discussions with Mr Pavel Sulyandziga, RAIPON's Vice-President, Mr

O.N. Zaporotskiy, Vice-President of the RAIPON regional branch of the Koryak Autonomous Okrug, Ms Olga Murashko, IWGIA's representative in Moscow, and Thomas Koehler, the consultant to the Danish Environmental Protection Agency.

As a result of Mr Sulyandziga's and Mr Koehler's study trip to Kamchatka, the parties decided to establish RAIPON's Ethno-Ecological Centre in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, with local offices in the village of Ossora, Karaginskiy Rayon (the traditional territory of the Koryaks), in the village of Kovran, Tigil'skiy Rayon (the Council for Revival of the Itelmens "Tkhsanom"), and in the village of Palana (the administrative centre of the Koryak'skiy Autonomous Okrug).

Numerous meetings with the indigenous people, with RAIPON's local leaders, with representatives of various local authorities brought forth the understanding that the key problems of the indigenous population are rooted in the fight for traditional territories and traditional resources. Thus, the agenda for the information centres was defined.

1. Establishment of the two-way information flow between RAIPON and the grass roots indigenous groups in the north of Kamchatka Peninsula:

1. Provision of information on the activities of RAIPON, international organisations and indigenous organisations in other regions of the North, Siberia and the Far East to the grass roots groups of the indigenous people of the Kamchatka Peninsula: the tribal and family communities, the ethnic enterprises, the reindeer herders.
2. Establishment of a return informational flow on environmental and legal problems from the grass roots indigenous groups of Kamchatka to RAIPON.
3. Establishment of information flows among the grass roots non-governmental indigenous organisations of Kamchatka, both through the information centre and directly.
4. Conducting workshops on protection and preservation of traditional knowledge, as well as carrying out environmental training.
5. Establishment of communication with and a database on all NGOs of the peninsula.

2. Traditional use of natural resources by the indigenous peoples - model for the rational use and protection of the traditional territories, preservation of the indigenous area of inhabitation, establishment of optimal conditions for non-hindered cultural development.

1. Creation of a database on the federal and regional legislation regarding traditional use of natural resources by indigenous people.
2. Creation of a database on the ethnic enterprises and tribal communities registered in the Koryak'skiy Autonomous Okrug and the Kamchatskaya Oblast.
3. Analysis of indigenous economic activities with respect to taxes, quotas on fish, sea mammals, fur-bearing animals, and bears.
4. Education and consultation on protection of indigenous rights in the North at workshops and conferences locally.
5. Implementation of a programme on small grants to preserve traditional environmental knowledge and traditional use of natural resources.

The priority for our work will be studies of positive experience in problem-solving within tribal economies of and ethnic enterprises in our region and in Russia, in order to promote:

1. Studies of factors and preconditions for the sustainable development of Kamchatka's indigenous peoples, minimizing environmental damage;
2. Distribution of information on indigenous rights to use, control and protect territories of traditional use;
3. Participation in the economic decision-making process on the use of resources and distribution of derived profits;
4. Establishment of indigenous self-government structures.

A significant amount of intensive work needs to be done. We have a common cause though: to strengthen the political and economic position of the indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East, and to consolidate the northern indigenous minorities movement. We have to bring our efforts together. Our information centre in Kamchatka is available for any kind of cooperation. We look forward to your letters (addressed to the magazine).

Activity of the Association of the Indigenous Peoples in the Khabarovskiy Kray

G. N. Volkova, President, Khabarovskiy Kray branch of RAIPON

The regional non-governmental organisation, the Association of the Indigenous Peoples of the Khabarovskiy Kray (RAIPON), was registered at Khabarovskiy Kray's Regional Authority Justice Department on 11 September 1992, with certificate of regis-

tration № 98. The new charter is registered in Department of Justice of the Khabarovskiy Kray, certificate № 98, 30 June 1999.

The association was created in 1990 with the aim to consolidate the indigenous minorities of the Kha-

barovskiy Kray, to implement and protect indigenous rights and interests, to address problems of socio-economic and cultural development of these indigenous peoples, to preserve and to revive the traditional way of life, to promote ethnic awareness, to increase the quality of indigenous life, to protect the environment in the areas traditionally inhabited by indigenous people in the Khabarovskiy Kray, and to revive and to develop traditional indigenous crafts, culture, and languages.

At present, the association has 17 regional branches and legal entities in 15 regions, with total membership of about ten thousand people.

In the first half of the year 2000, the RAIPON branch of the Khabarovskiy Kray has established three centres:

1. A youth centre with the following areas of activity: environmental protection, public health, culture, training, and legal questions. The centre is managed by T.V. Korzh.

Aims of the centre:

- Uniting young people in the region;
- Legal training of the indigenous northern peoples;
- Raising ethnic awareness;
- To attract attention to the problems of the indigenous northern minorities;
- Active participation in socio-economic and cultural development of the indigenous northern minorities.

The centre has a charter and an action plan for 2000-2001 which includes workshops on the above areas. In addition, the centre produces an information newsletter and has set up a library.

2. An information and legal centre (to be financed by the Rockefeller Foundation through Pacific Environment and Resources Centre). The centre is managed by Ms G.M.Volkova; the centre's legal advisor is Mr D.A. Radchenko; and the information officer is Ms T.V. Korzh.

Aims and tasks of the centre:

- Protection of legal rights and interests of the indigenous peoples in the Khabarovskiy Kray, including through courts of law;
- Rendering legal aid to the indigenous people of the North;
- Training youth and drawing their attention to the problems of northern indigenous peoples;
- Creation of a database on the relevant legislation;
- Production and distribution of newsletters and other information materials to the federal and regional governmental agencies and NGOs;
- Legal initiatives to the governmental agencies on different social issues;
- Public initiatives on various issues;
- A databank on the indigenous legislation of the Far East;
- Publication of legal texts of the Far East on the indigenous peoples of the North;
- Youth workshops on legal issues;

- Workshops, conferences, and round tables with the indigenous peoples of the North and their associations;

- Assistance in training of indigenous staff (lawyers);
- Establishment of contacts with international, federal, regional, and ethnic NGOs;
- Consolidation of scientists, experts, representatives of governmental agencies and Northern minorities in order to initiate a decision-making process for the problems of the indigenous people of the North;
- Assistance to legal education of the Northern indigenous peoples.

The Centre provides a lawyer for consultations; the first newsletter is ready for publication; and the second legal textbook on indigenous affairs has been completed.

3. A centre on preservation of culture of the indigenous peoples of the North. The centre is managed by Mr N.E. Kimonko.

Aims of the centre:

- A database on cultural issues;
- Cultural events;
- Promotion of decision-making with respect to the indigenous culture.

A newsletter on the indigenous craftsmen has been produced and was sent to Germany with an expert from the Far Eastern Art Museum. RAIPON has organised two exhibitions of decorative and applied art at two international conferences. A project proposal on the sale of ethnic crafts was prepared and directed to WWF.

A project to establish a centre for traditional medicine is being prepared. The data collection started in May 2000.

In February 2000, the Khabarovskiy Kray's RAIPON branch and the central office of RAIPON conducted an international workshop-- "Sustainable development of the indigenous peoples of the North in the Amur area, the Khabarovskiy and Primorskiy krays with respect to traditional use of natural resources". The workshop was financed by the Canadian Embassy through IPS of the Arctic Council.

In May 2000, RAIPON established an Advisory Council on sustainable development of the indigenous peoples of the North with respect to the traditional use of natural resources. Leading experts and lawyers of the Far East are members of the council. Mr I.B.Bogdan, a lawyer and a director for the Institute of Environmental Law, is the head of the council. The council analyses the socio-economic situation of the indigenous people, conducts feasibility studies and makes assessments of indigenous people's economic and cultural development. It also focuses on environmental protection of indigenous territories in order to promote traditional ways of life and assist sustainable development of the indigenous people. The council is an NGO and a consultative body to the Khabarovskiy Kray branch of RAIPON.

Three meetings were held. The charter of the council, an action plan for the first half year of its activity and RAIPON's applications to the governmental agencies were produced.

The Khabarovskiy Kray branch of RAIPON has developed and initiated a legislative initiative in the administration of the Khabarovskiy Kray and the Regional Duma through a bill 'On Guarantees to the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples of the Khabarovskiy Kray'. An inquiry (June 2000) directed to the Regional Prosecutor's Office regarding implementation of the law "On territories of traditional use of natural resources by the indigenous peoples of the Khabarovskiy Kray" was initiated in order to inspect its compliance with the federal legislation. An inquiry on the Law "On hunting practices in the Khabarovskiy Kray" is being produced. Amendments to the civil code regarding use of forests in the Khabarovskiy Kray and to the law "On territories of traditional use of natural resources by the indigenous peoples of the Khabarovskiy Kray" with regard to tax incentives for ethnic enterprises and indigenous communities are being prepared. A project proposal on the concept of an ethnic policy for the indigenous peoples of the Khabarovskiy Kray and on the agreements with governmental authorities of the Khabarovskiy Kray and

with the Legislative Assembly were directed to the governmental authorities; they rejected the proposal. Proposal co-ordinators and Advisory Council members did not agree to the grounds for the rejections. The project proposal has been submitted to the relevant authorities again in July 2000. The regional Legislative Assembly is ready to approve the project proposals.

Round tables were proposed with the regional heads of RAIPON, the representatives of the Ministry for Natural Resources, the Ministry of Taxation, and Ministry for Economy and Trade in May 2000.

RAIPON proposed a project on concerning contamination of the Amur river. The project was directed to Germany.

A project proposal for an Advisory Board for the preservation of indigenous culture in the Khabarovskiy Kray was prepared by RAIPON. The scientists, art experts, archaeologists, and anthropologists will become members of the board, under the direction of Professor P.Ja.Gontmaher, PhD (history), the author of the series "The People of the Far East".

The Khabarovskiy Kray branch of RAIPON participates in international, regional, and local events pertaining to the indigenous peoples of the North.

Disturbing news from Kamchatka

Olga Murashko

At the end of July 2000, public hearings focused on Kamchatka's biodiversity protection programs were held in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy. There, in the presence of representatives of indigenous peoples' organizations, official agents responsible for the use of Kamchatka's natural resources declared their decision to exclude the previously agreed upon areas of the Tigil, Yicha and Oblukovina basins from those covered by the salmon protection program. The decision was motivated by the fact that protected environmental areas on these rivers would hinder the Kamchatka's Natural Resources Committee's plans to extract gold, nickel and other minerals as well as oil and gas in the areas concerned.

This statement, both alarming and raising a lot of questions, was like a bolt from the blue for the indigenous peoples of the region. Coupled with the gas pipeline project now well underway along the Sea of Okhotsk coast and the aggressive tone of the article by Mr. I. G. Petrenko, Head of the Geological Department, Kamchatka Oblast Natural Resources Committee (*Any Need for Gold and Gas in Kamchatka?*) in the local Kamchatkan press, it has prompted worries over the fate of Kamchatka and the Sea of Okhotsk.

The point is that for the last 15 years Kamchatka

has faced a struggle between two concepts guiding the region's development. One was based on efforts to expand mineral extraction, the other was focused on protecting the unique environment of Kamchatka and developing environment-oriented branches of economy - deep processing of renewable natural resources, mainly marine bioresources, advancing nontraditional types of power engineering (thermal, solar and wind energy), and upgrading tourist facilities and services.

In the mid-1990s, it looked as if the pendulum had swung to the side of the environmental concept. In 1996, as a result of a sizable effort carried out by scientists over a number of years, five protected areas in Kamchatka were included in the UNESCO system of the World Natural Heritage. Starting in 1997, a strategy to protect Kamchatka's biodiversity has been under formulation by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Global Ecological Foundation (GEF). Two programs have been proposed to the Russian government and Administrations of Kamchatka Oblast and Koryak Autonomous Okrug: *The Preservation of Biodiversity of Four Protected Natural Territories of the Kamchatka Oblast* and *The Preservation and Management of Salmon Population in the Kamchatka Peninsula*. The main objective of

both programs is to create conditions favourable for protection as well as rational and sustainable use of natural resources of Kamchatka. Both programs have concentrated largely on preserving the traditional skills and practices of Kamchatka's indigenous peoples in order to develop their own potential for self-sufficiency. Indigenous peoples' organizations have participated actively in the development of these programs. They have followed suit by drafting programs to revive reindeer herding, sea mammal hunting, and ecologically clean traditional modes of transport, to develop ethno-ecological tourist services, and to promote the participation of indigenous peoples in environmental protection. The indigenous peoples had great expectations regarding such programs.

In the summer of 2000, however, the attitude of the Kamchatka administration towards the environmental programs changed. After the break-up of the State Committee on Ecology in May 2000 and the transfer of its functions to the Ministry of Natural Resources, the environmental issues of Kamchatka, like elsewhere, were inherited by the local committee on natural resources. By tradition, functionaries with geological education have played a leading role in the Kamchatka's Natural Resources Committee. For them, the break-up of the Committee on Ecology has been interpreted as a clear signal to replace the ecologically-oriented concept guiding the peninsula's development. They say that the events have coincided with expiration of the state license of the Kamchatka's Geological Committee. Besides, gubernatorial elections are due to take place in December. The time has come to sum up.

Apparently faced with the results of their efforts, some entity concerned failed to think of anything better and opted to shift full responsibility for their own inactivity and set-backs in the economic development of Kamchatka in recent years on to ecologists. Fault-finders were not fastidious in their choice of words criticising the local ecologists. Thus, Mr. Petrenko, who made a big splash in the peninsula with his article *Any Need for Gold and Gas in Kamchatka?*, labeled environmentalists of Kamchatka not only as agents of foreign capital seizing the entire mass media but also as *cannibals*, ascribing an absurd goal to their activities - the reduction of the population. Some quotations from the article: *'The introduction of the envisaged protection areas is yet another step towards the reduction of population'*; *'The creation of two Nature Parks dealt the most serious blow to the Kamchatkan gold'*; and, finally, *'The deceived Kamchatkan school children, under the guidance of Madam Romanova, using American money, stood out for the interests of U.S. mining companies.'* The last phrase refers to schoolchildren picketing the administration office in protest against gold mining in Kamchatka. The article is chock-full with mythical tons of production shortfalls and millions of expected lost profits through the

ecologists' fault.

Similar statements were made by other officials during the public hearings on Kamchatka's biodiversity protection. One of them snorted: *'We are offered a meager \$10 million while nickel alone would give us \$600 million.'* It was bad enough since it did not sound quite decent. Echoing a character in a novel by Il'f and Petrov, we would add: *'Bargaining is inappropriate in this case'*, since the gratuitous \$10 million was offered immediately and the rest \$30 million in the next decade. Those were real investments, the hard cash so sorely needed in Kamchatka as primary capital to prop up environmental services and develop profitable tourist sector of economy. \$600 million for nickel was in fact a mythical figure - there are no such deposits of nickel in Kamchatka and the world nickel market is oversaturated. Sales, in this case, will have to be at dumping prices with further losses in costs to construct sidings and a processing plant in remote areas, as well as the cost of environmental damage and the loss of profits from sports, eco- and ethno-tourism.

It did not occur to anyone that the deposits of nickel happened to be on the ancestral land of the indigenous peoples of Kamchatka. The planned extraction of other deposits affects in a similar way the territories of traditional use by the indigenous peoples of Kamchatka. The administration has a peculiar answer to these legal objections: *'We cannot ignore the interests of the entire population of Kamchatka in the interests of 150 (or 450, maybe more) people.'*

Unfortunately, 'the interests of the entire population of Kamchatka' would hardly be met by mineral resource development. Mountains of gold and rivers full of oil promised by Kamchatkan geologists will not make the people of Kamchatka happy. To prove the point, it suffices to reflect on the Sakhalin experience of many years of geological surveys and development of oil and gas fields in the area. The population of Sakhalin was promised jobs and natural gas in their houses by 1995, but there are neither jobs nor gas. For some reason, gas supplies have been postponed until 2005-2010. Instead, strange Production Sharing Agreements (PSAs) are being signed with mining companies. For instance, in accordance with a PSA, the Sakhalin-2 Project enjoys full federal tax remission, except for royalties - the payment made for the utilisation of mineral wealth (6 percent) and profit tax (32 percent). In accordance with the decision of the Sakhalin Oblast Duma, the mining company, and all its contractors and subcontractors engaged in the Sakhalin-2 Project, are exempt from taxes otherwise directed to the Oblast budget.

In 1999, oil production started in the Astokhscoe field, deploying the most dangerous method of transportation — tankers — and the cheapest to get rid of it... sea dumping. The first tanker with Sakhalin oil cast off in July 1999. Its route to Japan goes along the

coast of Tyuleniy Island, a nature reserve and habitat of sea mammals and birds.

Even today, the Molikpak oil platform, which produced the first oil, dumps thousands of tons of used boring solutions and slurries containing heavy metals, oil products and other toxic substances.

What parameters do the state authorities use to evaluate the success of the Sakhalin offshore oil exploration program and what do the people of the region get from its realisation? An indirect answer can be found in an interview given by Mr. Igor P. Farakhutdinov in April 2000 to a TASS-PRESS correspondent. Proudly portraying the achievements of the Sakhalin Oblast in developing offshore oil and gas deposits, the Governor quoted the following indicator: in 1999, Sakhalin was ranked second in Russia judging by the level of foreign investments. But no matter how hard I tried to get to the core of the interview, I failed to find information of whether these investments made the life of the population in Sakhalin any better and where these investments were channeled.

The oil is being shipped from Sakhalin, the sea pollution is worsening, foreign oil companies employ only their own specialists with no employment offered to the local population, there is no natural gas in the homes of Sakhalin dwellers and no promised improvement of their life either. Consideration of the Sakhalin experience reveals that mining companies (foreign companies among them) and Russian authorities pursue a single goal - quick and maximum profits — while showing a total disregard for the environment and the interests of the population.

Foreign companies will surely be attracted to the development of both onshore and offshore mineral resource deposits in Kamchatka. What will it bring the population of Kamchatka? Have a look at Sakhalin and you will see.

A small group of professionals will, possibly, be

able 'to share overseas experience'; it is also possible that another small group of people will have some benefits. However, it is unlikely that the people gaining by the development of mineral resource deposits would outnumber those who would fall victim to this process, deprived of their traditional land and bases for subsistence. The entire population of Kamchatka would witness hardly any change for the better, while Kamchatka's environment — including the fish stock on which the majority of population depend for their subsistence — would definitely be negatively affected.

Mr. I. D. Petrenko wrote in his article that natural gas resources in Kamchatka would last for 15 years, and I have heard that gold and nickel deposits would not last longer than 10-15 years either. What comes next? It is quite possible that this is of no particular interest to Mr. I.D. Petrenko and the like-minded cohort of the same age in the current administration - in 15 years he will be 75. However, to present-day schoolchildren who recently picketed the administration office in protest against gold mining and to Kamchatka's indigenous people - Itelmens, Evens, Koryaks and Old-settlers — their future is of great concern. They will live in Kamchatka, and it is vital for them whether its environment is ruined by slapdash development and dirt-cheap clearance sales of non-renewable natural resources or its nature and its plentiful stocks are preserved.

To put the blame on those willing to help Kamchatka evolve while protecting its environment and resources, to refuse such offer of help and instead mastermind hurried squandering and devastation of its natural resources is equivalent to living only for today. The indigenous peoples of Kamchatka and everyone else whose future is linked with the region cannot afford it.

We should be getting ready for the encounter between the two civilizations as early as today

Recorded by N. Shonina

One does not infrequently come across sacral sites on the tundra. Most often, this is some hill, where one finds a pile of old reindeer skulls and pegs with colored rags, and some rings attached to poles with ropes. In general, a pile of baubles. The Nenets know that one should not touch such baubles, or, all the more so, tear them off lest the host of the site should take offence. The spirits are invisible, but they see everything. They are not very kind to people. But they can be understood. They take care of their domain: the tundra, lakes, rivers and forests. Most often, if their

path lies near the sacred site, the Nenets tries to blandish the invisible inhabitants of the sanctuary. He will have a smoke and will leave some tobacco on the ground. If there is some vodka, he will pour some from the bottle, but he will not touch the sacred poles. But a white newcomer is very much interested in touching some of those goods.

The above lines from the foreword to the story by Nadezhda Salinder, "Spirits See Everything", may seem strange or mystical. Newcomers, even those who lived there for dozens of years, know only very

little about the culture of the peoples of the extreme North. During the years of great construction projects and universal atheism during the Communist era, few people were aware of the fact that one could attempt to suppress the beliefs of a of a people but one could not eliminate them.

Today, our society is trying to rectify the extremities of several recent decades. The believers are no longer persecuted and temples, mosques, and churches are restored. In our Okrug, too, indigenous intellectuals have been calling increasingly insistently for protection and conservation of sacred sites on the tundra. These issues are particularly topical today, when the industrial development of oil and gas has recently intensified.

Recently, the Gydan tundra was visited by Galina Kharyuchi, Senior Researcher of the Center for Research of Humanitarian Problems of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Candidate of Historical Sciences. The purpose of the trip was the investigation and mapping of the areas of ethnic sanctuaries and sacred sites (including burial sites) of indigenous minorities. G.P. Kharyuchi has been conducting this work for about two years. Compilation of maps is a complicated matter. There are numerous subtleties; those sanctuaries have to be construed carefully, because the significance of their sacred contents is passed down orally.

We have asked Sergey Kharyuchi, President of the Association of the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East, Deputy Chairman of the State Duma of the Yamalo-Nenetskiy Autonomous Okrug.

It is well known that the subsoil assets of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug comprise the bulk of the hydrocarbon raw materials, including 90 % of the world resources of natural gas. 92 % of Russian gas is produced in the Okrug. There are also huge resources of oils and minerals. Today, the Okrug area has 197 oil and gas fields, out of which only dozens of fields are operational. Taking into account the fact that in the near future other fields will also be developed in the near future, industrialists are inevitably coming to the Trans-Polar Region.

The Tazovskiy District area has 28 oil and gas fields. Only a single one – Messoyakhinskies – is fully operational. But the remaining area has been so far intact, which essentially applies to the Okrug as a whole. The Purovskiy District and, partly, Nadym District are being developed. Hence, the "encounter of the two civilizations" should be prepared for fundamentally. In any case, industrialists should make use of technologies for the production of oil and gas that are minimally detrimental to the local environment.

There is no doubt that the lands of the people traditionally living in locations of future oil and gas extraction will become inaccessible to them, irrespective of whether we want it or not. Such is the law of life. Our task is to try to ensure that the relations of these two meeting civilizations are marked by equitableness and mutual good will.

Similar practices exist in the world. One example is in the Mackenzie Valley in Canada, where indigenous people are engaged in fishing and hunting and where, in the same area, oil and gas are produced. In this case, reindeer graze near the drilling rig, wild mammals occur and indigenous people find their hunting grounds. We, too, should strive for and achieve such co-existence and cooperation.

Hence, the Law of Specially Protected Areas Has been adopted in the Russian Federation. It covers reserves, sanctuaries, i.e., already approved forms of specially protected areas whose purpose is the conservation of flora and fauna, and also territories of relatively dense northern, Siberian and far eastern indigenous settlement. In this law the locations of holy places and sacred sites are also treated as protected areas. But while the first paragraphs of the law define concretely what reserves and sanctuaries are, the concepts of ethnic monuments and holy places are only loosely defined. Currently, a draft Federal law is being prepared. But it would not be valid until those monuments of cultural and natural heritage are individually registered.

But they are scattered throughout the tundra and taiga. Some holy places were originally the sites of a particular clan or tribe. There were also inter-tribal sanctuaries. From generation to generation they provided protection for the members of the clans and tribes. No one from a different clan or tribe could encroach on the hunting and fishing grounds or reindeer ranges belonging to other groups. That is the traditional law of taiga and tundra dwellers and in accordance with the International Convention on Indigenous Peoples this is common law. Today our task is to convert the common law rights to the Federal or Okrug laws. This is only possible if the areas of dense indigenous settlement acquire the status of specially protected areas.

The complexity of the work compiling sanctuary maps lies in the fact they are divided into types and subtypes in accordance with their purpose. There are clan and inter-clan, tribal and inter-tribal sanctuaries. There are also inter-regional sanctuaries. For instance, in our neighbourhood, this is the Angalskiy Mys. As early as the beginning of the 20th century, from the Yenisey River, Yugra, and also the European part of the mainland, the Argish gathered to make sacrifices there in the spring, when nature awakened. A fair was also conducted there – a commodity exchange between Russian and foreign industrialists, visiting merchants and the local population. In this way, people communicated, maintained contacts, and ethnic identities were not disturbed. In addition to the Angalskiy Mys, our Khanty-Mansiyskiy Okrug has other holies (lake Num-to).

Being monuments to spiritual culture, holy sites also served to ensure some kind of safe conduct. Because Russia of today is undergoing a spiritual revival, we are obliged to concern ourselves with this work in the territory where indigenous minorities live.

A great role to play there is that of indigenous intellectuals because this is a very sensitive matter. No one would wish to share his/her intimate feelings, or secrets belonging to a particular tribe, with a stranger. This is only natural. And this explains the complexity of the work begun on the investigation and mapping of sanctuaries and sacred sites. Any indigenous person should be aware that the above work is done in the interests of his/her fellow tribesmen and assist people who are engaged in this important work.

It is important that all ethnic burial sites and sanctuaries are clearly indicated on the maps. In addition to their spiritual significance, these special places indicate the territories of particular clans and their buffer zones.

In the near future, all this should promote a painless and civilized solution of the problems of cooperation between indigenous people leading a

traditional way of life and industrialists who will work on their traditional areas.

Practically, it would work something like this: An industrial company comes with a license for the development of an oil or gas field. Along with the license, the manager of the company is provided with a map of adjacent areas where all sanctuaries are indicated. The manager must legally assume responsibility not only for environmental conservation but also the preservation of the culture monument situated in and around the area of extraction. In the event of a member of the company being discovered engaged in illegal hunting or disturbing burial sites, the license would be withdrawn. Today, there is a significant number of companies who wish to work in Yamal to develop its natural deposits and make a profit. The administrators should be responsible for protecting the indigenous population against the vandalism of the newcomers, which should be reflected in the law.

Traditional nature use and traditional knowledge: The rights and responsibilities

A report to the International Youth Seminar "Indigenous Peoples and the Environment of the Russian Arctic"

Olga Murashko

A separate Article of ILO Convention 169 deals with the rights of indigenous peoples to traditional lands. The Constitution of the Russian Federation protects the indigenous living environment and traditional ways of life of ethnic communities. The Draft Law on Territories of Traditional Nature Use, now under elaboration, is oriented at realization of this right in Russia.

Several years have passed since some administrative units of the Federation passed their own laws on traditional nature use. However, these laws have practically not been implemented. This is not only due to shortcomings in the laws themselves, unwillingness of authorities, or lack of funds.

In many cases the indigenous peoples themselves have shown to be unprepared to put the laws into practice. One of the reasons is the fact that there are practically no specialists (lawyers, economists, ecologists, hunting experts, rangers, production managers, etc.) among the indigenous peoples required to rationally use and administer territories of traditional nature use. Another reason is the lack of a general understanding of what really is traditional nature use in the minds of the majority of young leaders and, consequently, unawareness of how to realize its revival.

Three questions should be answered: What is traditional nature use by legal and scientific definition?

What is the link between traditional nature use and participation of indigenous peoples in the protection of the nature? What can the indigenous youth do to preserve and develop traditional nature use and keep traditional knowledge?

The only definition of traditional nature use given in the implied Federal legislation is in the law '*On the Fundamentals of State Control of Socio-Economic Development of the North of the Russian Federation*' (1996)¹⁹: "*Traditional nature use* is assigned to historically formed methods of mastering the environment on the basis of long-term ecologically balanced use of basically renewable natural resources without undermining the ability of steady reproduction or reducing the diversity of natural resources."²⁰

The strong point of this definition is the fact that it incorporates an element of historical dynamics indicating that traditional nature use is a process of historical transformation of methods of mastering the environment with certain constants.

Definitions of traditional nature use can be found

¹⁹ There is no definition of the notion of traditional nature use in the Federal law '*On Guarantees of the Rights of Indigenous Small Peoples of the Russian Federation*' recently signed by the President. It occurs only in the context of 'lands of traditional nature use'.

²⁰ The concept of this definition was worked out by L.S. Bogoslovskaya and E.E. Syroyechkovskiy in the 1980s.

in the scientific literature: *'For traditional societies nature use is very close to the notion of an 'economy', habitual in ethnography, but it includes, to a greater extent, the natural side of economic activity (resources and the ecosystem as a whole) implying as a must its spiritual component of rational knowledge, empirical ideas about environment, a system of their transfer and training'* (Igor Krupnik, 1986).

In his doctoral thesis *'Traditional nature use of indigenous small peoples of the North'*, Dr. K. Klovov defined the subject of his geography-oriented work as *'a process of interface between indigenous small Northern ethnic groups, on the one hand, and the feeding landscape and socio-economic environment of 'the dominating ethnos', on the other'* (K. Klovov, 1998).

Some scholars doubt the modern reality of the definition of 'traditional' in this context: *'Traditional nature of both an economy and a way of life is a scientific category which can be 'recognised' in real life with a considerable stretch of imagination only'* (V. Stepanov, 1998).

A witty attempt to define 'a traditional sector of economy (of the peoples of the North)' was made by A.N. Yamskov who suggested to assess 'traditional nature' by such pragmatic criteria as *'preservation of succession in using territories and water areas..., in types of labour activities...; preservation of the kind of products received to be consumed or sold... along with preservation of a natural change of generations among the corresponding groups of population'* (A. Yamskov, 1998).

All research into traditional nature use emphasises its indissolubility with the living environment, its cultural and adaptive function providing flexibility and adequacy of traditional nature use to climatic changes. It has been ascertained, for example, that during the periods of local climatic warming some reindeer herders switched over to sea mammal hunting, then switched back to reindeer herding when it became colder, since climatic changes entailed changes in the resource basis of traditional nature use. Comprehensiveness is recorded as a combination of different types of nature use on various landscapes in one and the same area.

Archeologists are aware of the fact that traditional nature use for ages has included the exchange of products and minerals between territorial groups. Stone tools were found hundreds of kilometers away from the deposits of the siliceous materials the artifacts had been made of; reindeer herders used to make reindeer harness out of seal skins while sea mammal hunters ate venison in winter months.

Basic principles of traditional nature use have always been a high degree of adaptability, long duration, extensiveness across vast areas, a system of recreation of renewable natural resources, an extremely low level of energy consumption, and rationalism. All these principles have served their purpose until recently, until the beginning of the period of administrative integration which was marked by the liquidation of villages, the destruction of the traditional settlement and economic development systems, the erosion of the upbringing and education systems, the introduction of new, intensive economic methods breaking up the ecological balance.

The environment-oriented legislation hand in hand with environmental organisations, therefore, have been the major legal allies of indigenous peoples in the defense of their traditional nature use and indigenous living environment. To preserve areas of traditional nature use and to protect biodiversity on the territories of traditional settlement, indigenous people can offer the authorities their participation in the defense of the natural environment by mutual management of resource use in the areas of traditional settlement. One can learn about one of these models, applied in a special protected area of traditional nature use, 'Tkhsanom', in Kamchatka from an article on *'How can the constitutional right to protect a traditional way of life and indigenous environment of habitation be put into effect?'* in *'The Peoples of the North of Russia on the way to a new millennium'* (P. Sulyandziga & O. Murashko, Moscow, 2000).

Meanwhile, to pass on to the next subject of what the indigenous peoples themselves can do to revive traditional nature use, let us go back to defining the term of traditional nature use. Here is my own definition accentuating the interfaces that exist between traditional nature use and all aspects of culture:

'Traditional nature use of indigenous peoples and ethnic entities of the North includes historically formed anthropogenic ecosystems, i.e. the areas as such with biological resources, populations of wild and domestic animals and methods of their use (all three components linked with reindeer breeding and other Northern forms of raising local and aboriginal breeds of domestic animals, river, lake and sea fishing, sea mammal hunting, flesh and fur-trapping, small-scale gardening and plant gathering, crafts) as well as traditional social institutions providing permanent use of renewable natural resources and transfer of ecologically and ethnically significant information (such as systems of self-administration, organisation of economic teams, disposition of stationary and seasonal commercial activity-oriented settlements, camps, nomadic routes, systems of land and catch distribution, traditional economic calendar, commercial activity bans, systems of recreation of renewable natural resources, temporary withdrawal of some land allotments from economic turnover as sacral, prohibited zones, the knowledge of edible and me-

dicinal plants, methods of trapping, fishing, hunting, gathering and processing of products, skills in making implements of labour and domestic articles, handicrafts, forms of applied art, a system of education and upbringing of children, etc.).'

It is precisely the last point, referring to the transfer of ecologically and ethnically significant information, that finds itself in the most precarious situation, since the last generation of carriers of this information gradually disappears. And it is precisely this very part of traditional culture that is in the hands of the indigenous peoples themselves.

There is an external reason for the interruption of the tradition of traditional knowledge transfer – the period of administrative management of indigenous peoples' economy, of education of the young generation in boarding schools. But there is an internal reason just as well – the younger generation of indigenous people does not know their ancestors' traditions because they do next to nothing about learning and safeguarding them.

At present, with the protection of traditional culture, traditional nature use and indigenous living environment becoming major slogans of the indigenous peoples' movement towards protection of their ethnical identity as one of their most important fundamental rights, the problem of preserving and transfer of traditional knowledge becomes most pressing.

I have learnt a lot from the experience of rendering assistance to Kamchatkan peoples in the organisation of the protected traditional nature use area 'Tkhsanom' as it is described in the mentioned article. Methods of indigenous population's participation in the recording and transfer of ecologically and ethnically significant information have been elaborated in practice.

After the publications featuring the organisation of 'Tkhsanom' I was contacted by representatives from various regions with the request to assist in organization of the other traditional nature use areas. They had a lot of questions: how to substantiate the boundaries of the territory, the various types of intended activities, how to raise funds to prepare a project and to accomplish it.

When 'Tkhsanom' was initiated, the indigenous population of a small village had a claim on a vast territory, where they wished to develop various kinds of the almost abandoned activities. A huge though non-verbalised potential of traditional knowledge stood fast behind these claims. To turn it into scientific and legal documents, a new system of methods to record such knowledge was required.

For instance, how could territorial claims of nature users of a small settlement of 400 residents be substantiated? To do so, it was necessary to collect genealogies which made it clear that grandmothers and grandfathers of present-day villagers – that resettled, hardly willingly, in Kovran almost 50 years ago – had

their origins in five – now non-existent – villages, and used economically the very territory later claimed by their descendants.

The native language was practically not used in everyday life. However, its carriers – a dozen old men – have survived who, recollecting their childhood and youth, described various traditional types of activities, remembered corresponding terms omitted in the existing dictionary, like the names of locations, plants, animals, and implements of labour available for traditional nature use. The customs – regulations of life described by ethnographers a hundred years ago and even earlier – happened to be further developed and used in real life on the memory of today's older generation.

But this time the old people shared their memories only with scholars who asked them about the past, not with their grandchildren who, unfortunately, were not inquiring.

Recording of traditional knowledge is in the hands of ethnographers, and they publish the collected information in their scientific articles. Regrettably, this procedure is coupled with unavoidable transformation of information, set out in a different, scientific language. Scholarly studies cannot replace a direct transfer of traditional knowledge and, therefore, ensure its succession. It is important to have this knowledge, disappearing along with the older generation, saved and later transferred to children by the indigenous youth.

One does not have to be an ethnographer to do so, it is enough to be a regular literate and interested person using a simple system of methods. I am going to describe a number of such systems drawn up in the process of my work in Kamchatka and then tested among the Udege people of Krasnyy Yar.

Making genealogies of the population residing in the village

There are several methods to make an account of family relations with the help of genealogies. It is fit to use graphical schemes; writing down a story of one's relatives also suits the purpose. The main thing is to try and record the place and date of birth, at least an approximate age, and the date of death of every relative named. Everything that could be learnt about the person concerned should be registered just as well: his peculiar features, interesting true-life stories of what happened to him.

Locally stored archival documents, i.e. old household books, parish registers, archives of the Register Offices issuing certificates of registration of one's

status should be used for documentary acknowledgment of genealogies (which might be needed to substantiate claims on the areas of traditional nature use).

Several goals could be pursued while compiling genealogies of your fellow-villagers: to preserve and record case histories of clans residing in the village, to reconstruct the scheme of their former settling, to record the local topographic names by mapping out the names of birthplaces or locations of the life and economic activity of grandfathers and grandmothers and, if lucky, those of great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers. You can learn and take a note of many interesting stories of your ancestors' lives and produce a chronicle of lives of the most remarkable villagers while writing down genealogies.

Traditional knowledge of objects of the natural world and the recording of terminology in the native language

One can find out about the traditional ecological calendar, that is about what and when things were done, about the properties of medicinal and edible plants, animal habits, how many and which animals there were in the past, which species of animals and plants became extinct and which new ones appeared, whether animals became smaller or bigger, etc. while conversing with village elders.

In case you talk to a native speaker ask him to pronounce names of plants, animals, traditional dishes in his native language. Try to preserve the words by turning them into a written form, with the help of their phonetic transcription and tape recordings. It should be noted that the lexicon of even those languages of the Northern peoples which are backed up with textbooks and dictionaries is very meager indeed. It is void of the larger number of names of plants and animals to be found in the living areas of the Northern peoples. Some notions pertaining to traditional nature use have no equivalents in Russian, and for this reason such information is of great scientific interest.

The elders should be questioned about their childhood, about what their parents were doing all the year round, what their own participation was, from what age and together with whom (their grandmother, grandfather, some other relative or non-relative), in which locations, at what time of the year, when they were engaged in this or that activity the last time, which holidays there used to be in spring, fall or winter.

It is advisable to tape-record all the conversations about the above subjects and keep the recordings without erasing any of them, for they all contain unique materials which could be used over and over again to all intents and purposes.

Traditional crafts and forms of applied art

There are connoisseurs of traditional cuisine or skilful people able to make traditional clothes, good at embroidery, carpentry, dog –, reindeer sledge and boat building, who at least have seen how all that could be done or made, in every village. It is vital not only to tape their stories about traditional handicrafts but also to photograph the article shown to you and make videotape recordings in process, if a VCR is available. There might be those among the elders and representatives of the middle-age generation who would be ready to share their know-how with children, at least with one or two of them.

How can the collected information be used and traditional knowledge disseminated

The information collected while making genealogies can be used to map traditional settling and economic activity. Such a map would be very handy when substantiating the boundaries of traditional nature use.

The information about the history of clans can be used while selecting literature on local lore, at least for the native village school. Genealogies could be helpful in organising a village or school museum. The information about traditional activities and nature-oriented knowledge can be of similar use in a museum and when sharing it with schoolchildren on excursions round the neighborhood, or when they are on holidays in their summer camps.

It is possible to compile a small dictionary of animal and plant names, local topographic names even in the areas where the native language is almost totally extinct to turn it into an instrument in children's educational games played during extracurricular activities and excursions.

One should not try to use the collected information in teaching traditional knowledge at school. The introduction of any knowledge into a school program entails a danger of psychological seizure of offered information among pupils, compels the teacher to test their knowledge in some way or rather. Traditional knowledge is a lost side of everyday life, and children must learn it after classes.

The knowledge, though far too modest, of the native language vocabulary is most successfully implanted at kindergartens while the kids memorize rhymes, play games and go on excursions around the village.

The process of collecting such information would give its collectors a lot just as well, helping them find and register traditional knowledge, try and discern their own ethnic culture in real life.

The use of the above simplified systems of methods in independent work of indigenous youth to preserve traditional knowledge has been tested several months ago while compiling programs of small grants

in the village of Krasnyy Yar. The first reaction on the part of young people trained as teachers or having other specialised education was quite common: on the one hand, the young people are convinced in the former wealth of their own ethnic culture; on the other hand, they regret its loss and doubt greatly that it is possible to find and preserve anything at all. Little by little, it has become clear while discussing concrete themes and systems of methods that interviews with the older generation make it possible to collect both clan histories and local topographic names to map the system of traditional settling, to record Udege names of plants and animals, to collect the names of medicinal and edible plants and recipes for their use. It has been discovered that there are, after all, those who could teach children the traditional art of wood carving and embroidery.

Four small-scale projects on preservation and

transfer of traditional knowledge of the indigenous population of Krasnyy Yar have been, therefore, elaborated and supported by a representative of the Danish Environmental Protection Agency. Such projects are viewed as a real and necessary step towards preservation of traditional knowledge, development of traditional nature use and, above all, awakening the children's and young people's interest in their own ethnic culture thus paving the way for the generation-to-generation transfer of living traditions.

The direct participation of the indigenous youth in collecting, recording and disseminating traditional knowledge is a method of making their own ethnical identity relevant to them. It will help the indigenous youth to speak up for their rights to traditional nature use, the preservation of indigenous peoples' culture, and the protection of their natural environment with competence and greater confidence.

The Drama of Vorkuta Nenets

The headline of the present issue is concerned with letters and other background material received by RAIPON in connection with the plight of a Nenets group in the region of Vorkuta, Republic of Komi.

This is series of letters, the first of which is dated January 1999, and the two latter obtained recently in the course of the preparation of this issue, registered in the State Duma of the Yamalo-Nenetskiy Okrug on June 13, 2000. It is reminded that S.N.Kharyuchi, President of RAIPON, is a deputy of the Okrug's State Duma.

The matter is striking in every respect: the appalling facts of indigenous people deprived of their legal rights, their suffering, the indifference to the tragedy of this minority – presumably due to lack of information – by all levels of the administration of the Komi Republic.

Witnesses and those involved in the tragedy, for some reason, address a public organisation – The Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East of the Russian Federation (RAIPON) – rather than administrative bodies. They file requests to solve problems that are beyond the competence of RAIPON. The issues concern employment, housing, social, medical and civil matters, as well as the problem of establishing a commission to investigate the present situation. These are problems to be taken care of by the appropriate executive bodies, ministries and agencies of ethnic policy, social welfare, health, education, labor, employment and the interior.

But RAIPON cannot stand by when it is appealed to by representatives of indigenous peoples of the North in their last hope. Hence, we are publishing below this record of arbitrariness and suffering.

Information letter to RAIPON from the Saint-Petersburg Society of Students from the Nenetskiy Autonomous Okrug:

“On the situation of indigenous people living in the administrative district of Vorkuta

The city of Vorkuta is situated in the Kara tundra and in the Vorkuta District adjacent to the city. About 60 Nenets families – indigenous residents – live in this area. They all are registered in the Khalmer-Yu village on the tundra. After the Khalmer-Yu village was closed down (3 years ago, in 1995) all the miner residents received apartments in the European and southern parts of Russia and compensations, while indigenous people became neglected; they no longer had even a store where they could buy food. Currently, 30 families are registered in the village of Sovetskiy, Vorkuta District, and they buy food in this village. Nobody knows where the remaining 30 families are – presumably, they migrate near Khalmer-Yu. In 1955, after the closure of the Khalmer-Yu mine, 30 families started to come to the Sovetskiy village. They would sit near the store on their sleds, expecting to sell meat or pelts in order to buy bread and other food. They kept sitting in the frost and snowstorm, cold and starving, with their young children. Local residents would bring tea and bread, invite them into their apartments and feed them. Those who did this

were mostly pensioners, teachers and medics, who were poor themselves. They made a list of the indigenous people, made arrangements for them to receive their pensions, and thanks to that, these Nenets finally obtained some money to buy food. It was also found that their children never went to school, with rare exceptions: only those children whose parents died were admitted to boarding schools. Thus, in the Vorkuta District, the law of universal education had not been implemented; indigenous children were deprived of the right to education. The people lead a primeval mode of life. In the tents, an atmosphere of barbarism and alcoholism prevails, children are starving, they are physically handicapped; a 14-year old boy looks like a 7-year old, and a 19-year old girl like 10-year old child. In families with no reindeer (about 15 families out of the 30) only half of the children survive, sometimes even less. In the Valey family, in 1996, there were 7 children, but in 1998 only two of them had survived. At 16 years of age, girls are married off, actually sold for 27-30 reindeer. Girls are often married to their uncles.

The workers of the state farm "Olenevod" ["Reindeer Herder"] receive wages, their children and grandmothers live in apartments and eat well, they are brought food into their tents, they can speak Russian. By contrast, indigenous migrants are deprived of all that.

Characteristically, it is not state bodies that take care of tundra dwellers, but private persons. They take them to administrative bodies, where they encounter roughness, obduracy, unwillingness to do one's duty (not infrequently, they were met with such statements as "Go out, these hides stink!", "Go out, you are a nobody!" etc. For instance, the head of the emergency ward of the Sovetskiy village drove out an old woman with two grandsons, who were still ill, in order not to have them transported by helicopter during the flood.

For three years they have not been able to solve the problem of children's education. In 1996 the parents brought 25 children at an age between 7 and 14 years from the tundra for study. The boarding school had no vacancies, the children did not speak Russian, and they decided to put them into kindergarten No. 109 to study Russian to get prepared for school. It is not until the children had stayed in the kindergarten for two years, that a teacher from Naryan-Mar, T.V.Rasulova, arrived. Over 3.5 months, the teacher taught the children to read and write Russian and Nenets.

Before the 1998/1999 school year, the question arose as to following up the study, enrollment of children, employment of new teachers, work with parents (persuasion of them to send their children to school). It is necessary to teach children of all ages – creche and kindergarten groups are needed. It is necessary to open a boarding school or a branch boarding school No. 9, where children of all ages live and study. Serving this purpose in the village is the building of kindergarten No. 108, a warm two-storey building. The head of the administration, Roza Soroka, intended to use that building for the school of migrant Nenets. That vacant building was guarded, but in the spring 1998, the guard was removed, and as a result, the building was completely looted.

September 1, 1998, came – the beginning of the new school year. The children from the tundra were not brought, the teachers not summoned, the study of senior children not organised.

It is necessary to establish a national center for work with indigenous people, their enlightenment, elimination of illiteracy, control of alcoholism and infectious diseases. To achieve this, specialists are needed to hold lectures in the Nenets language, for instance, of the harm of alcoholism – this is the competence of educators, medics, etc.

Tatyana Rasulova

Recorded by Nikolay Latyshev, January 1999, village Sovetskiy"

Vladislav Peskov, a spokesman of the Saint-Petersburg Student Society passed on that information to Mikhail Kolegov, a member of the Ministry of Nationalities of the Komi Republic, who was attending a round table in Moscow on exchange of experience in

cooperation of state bodies of Norway, Sweden and Finland with Saami Parliaments. On arrangement with M. Kolegov, V. Peskov sent him that letter by e-mail. Shortly, M. Kolegov responded by an e-mail which contained some encouraging news:

"Dear Vladislav,

Below is the information obtained by the Ministry of Nationalities of the Komi Republic regarding the life of the Nenets in the territory of the Komi Republic.

Four factories were built in the region of the city of Vorkuta.

Work has been done on the establishment of around-the-clock groups for reindeer herder children in kindergarten No. 110 of Vorkuta.

I have also found information on the medical service for unorganised reindeer herders (the Nenets) in the Vorkuta District, whereby such work is done by the administration of Vorkuta and the City Board for Health Care. In fact, the Nenets are registered for medical care and rehabilitation, in particular the children. Affiliated with the "Olenevod" cooperative is a medical station of city polyclinic for the medical care of reindeer herders, both members of the "Olenevod" cooperative and self-employed. There is a card

file for all the reindeer herders, where the Nenets are sent for medical centers for further examination and therapy.”

Information on the Activities of the Ministry of Nationalities of the Republic of Komi under the Framework of the Cooperation of the Komi Republic and the Nenetskiy Autonomous Okrug:

“The Nenetskiy Autonomous Okrug is home to over 5000 Komi, which accounts for 10% of all the residents of the Okrug. In the Okrug, the Komi are engaged in reindeer herding, management, industry, social sphere, etc. According to the census of 1989, the number of representatives of indigenous peoples in the Komi Republic is 495.

The reindeer herders of the Nenetskiy Autonomous Okrug and the Komi Republic have rangelands in both territories. The administrative bodies of both subjects have exempted both their reindeer herders and neighbours from land tax. The Ministry of Nationalities of the Komi Republic has prepared and coordinated an agreement with the Nenetskiy Autonomous Okrug in ethnic policy and social protection of the indigenous peoples of the North, migrating in the Nenetskiy Autonomous Okrug and the Komi Republic.

The Okrug receives textbooks from the Komi Republic and students from the Okrug study in the Republic. In Vorkuta a seasonal boarding house of an adaptive type operates, No. 110, where about 70 Nenets children live and study (reindeer herders, self-employed workers). They are taught the Nenets language by a teacher from Naryan-Mar.

The Okrug leader and the leaders of the ethnic movement regularly participate in various forums conducted in the Komi Republic. They were invited to the congresses of the Komi people and participated in the conferences of the Consultative Committee of the Finno-Ugric peoples (leader: V.P. Markov).

Currently, the Vorkuta District of the Komi Republic is home to 314 Nenets, whose socio-economic conditions are under close surveillance of the Komi Republic Government: On 25.08.1997, the decree by the Head of Administration of the Komi Republic No. 235 “On Measures for Social Protection of Indigenous Minorities of the North Residing in the Territory of the Komi Republic” was issued. The decree stated a number of organisational measures on social protection of indigenous minorities – including the Nenets – and on providing transport and communication to them. The above measures are financed by allocations from the federal budget of the Komi Republic and the “Gorod Vorkuta” [the city of Vorkuta] association.

A.K. Konyukhov
Minister of Ethnic Affairs,
Komi Republic”

Unfortunately, the story about the problems of the Vorkuta Nenets does not end on this official note, because the State Duma of the Yamalo-Nenetskiy Okrug received new letters through the President of

the Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East, which describe the hardships of the Nenets in the Sovetskiy village:

“Mr. Sergey Kharyuchi
President of the Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North,
Siberia and Far East of the Russian Federation

We, the undersigned, Sven-Erik Sosooar, doctorant of the Philosophy Faculty, Tartu University (Estonia), and Margarita Vasilyevna Latysheva, graduate student of the Tallinn Pedagogical University, arrived in Vorkuta to investigate of the language of the Nenets indigenous minority and their living conditions.

In order to collect material for our work, we talked with the Nenets of the Sovetskiy village, city of Salekhard, in the tents and on the tundra, and also visited a kindergarten in the Sovetskiy village, where Nenets children study. We found that migratory Nenets are characterised by absolute illiteracy, since they have never had any education facilities. Those people are deprived of the right to education.

The children attending the kindergarten do not know the Russian language; the elimination of teaching in the native language has been unjustified. Out of the 33 workers of the kindergarten not a single one has a commission of teaching in the Nenets language – the only teacher of the Nenets language has been dismissed on no sufficient grounds.

The school is organised with gross violation of specifications for people’s education. The Nenets who arrived from the tundra on reindeer would sit on their sleds with young children in cradles. There are no premises where they could rest, wash their children, warm up, drink tea, although there are numerous vacant apartments in the village. They complained that they were attacked by hooligans, their reindeer were stolen and killed, and the police did take no measures.

We were shocked by the attitude of the kindergarten administration. We were admitted into the kindergarten only for an hour and were not allowed to speak with the children freely. We were surprised by the claim of the kindergarten staff that the children already knew their native language, and would only need to learn Russian.

We would like to approach you with the request to check the above facts and take measures.

23 January 2000
city of Vorkuta, Sovetskiy village

Signatures:
Sven-Erik Sosaar - Valja 8-278, 10616 Tallin, Estonia
Margarita Latysheva"

"Mr. Sergey Kharyuchi
President
Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North,
Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation

From tundra dwellers
Vorkuta District
and residents of the village Sovetskiy

Dear Mr. Kharyuchi,

The residents of the Vorkuta tundra and the village Sovetskiy are addressing you.
Your urgent help is needed: The attitude towards the indigenous people residing in the city of Vorkuta is sheer arbitrariness and craziness.

People are deprived of things they are entitled to, including:

1. Housing

There are numerous vacant houses in the Sovetskiy village, and the administration of Vorkuta forbids registering the Nenets in the village – they believe that the Nenets do not need any houses.

Nadezhda Laptander, the mother of two children asks for an apartment in the Sovetskiy village, because every year she loses children who fell ill and die before they live to be two to three months old. If she had an apartment the children would have survived.

2. Absence of documents (passport, birth certificates, pension certificates, invalidity certificates)

For instance, in the Prokopii Laptander family, neither Prokopii nor his wife has a passport and, hence, they are not entitled to children's welfare or social welfare, although they badly need them, and besides, they are a family with many children. Last year an accident occurred: a bus run over the wife of Prokopii Laptander, and now she is partially paralysed.

There are over a dozen of families that have document problems. The children have no birth certificates or invalidity certificates.

3. Payment of pensions and children's welfare

There are some cases of failure to pay pensions or children's welfare due to lack of available documents. There were also some instances recorded when some Nenets failed to receive children's welfare for three months, namely for October, November and December 1999.

For instance, the following documents are absent:

- Andrey Ledkov – social welfare
- Evdokia Laptander – pension
- Galina Ledkova – social welfare, passport, pension
- Aanstasia Laptander – loss of mother
- Evdokia Ledkova – no passport
- Maria Laptander – widow, passport data are incorrect, does not receive pension or social welfare.

People are suffering due to lacking or incorrect passports, and also due to the unwillingness of the administration to help.

4. Social welfare once a year

In the early part of 2000, social welfare was granted to families which need it badly. 25 families were listed as those whose income is below the acceptable living standard. The criteria for allocations to each particular family are not known, since there is no information available about the actual life of reindeer herders. Their social status is still obscure. There are still families, which have no reindeer and are dragging on a wretched existence.

For instance:

- Pëtr Laptander has an annual income of 5140 rubles. He has over 1000 reindeer; his family comprises 10 persons. The children are three adult daughters and four sons, born in 1981 through 1988.
- Andrey Laptander's family has an income of 2632 rubles. This family needs material assistance. They have 100 reindeer. There are 7 persons in the family, including: two daughters, 17 and 18 years old, and the three others born in 1987-92. As you can see there is a large difference in income.
- Two widows received welfare for loss of breadwinner. The amount they received was much less than the one allocated.
- Anna Valey has an income of 1324 rubles. She has over 400 reindeer and a family of 6 persons. There are two adult children and two teenagers of 13-14 years. She is on welfare for loss of breadwinner.
- Maria Laptander has an income of 117 rubles. She has 10 reindeer and her elder son claims that the reindeer belong to him. Maria's two sons are 7 and 12 years old. She is on a loss of breadwinner welfare.

Today there is a great difference in terms of allocation and payment of social welfare for reindeer herders and residents of the Sovetskiy village. The choice of products provided by the welfare system is not suitable. The clients receive only rice and tinned meat, whereas reindeer herders need flour, sugar, butter, etc.

5. Provision of jobs and organisation of work on elimination of illiteracy among young people

Once, two girls, Tatyana and Nina Laptander, escaped from their parents from the tundra. For half a year they were promised housing and work in kindergarten No. 110. During six months they lived at the place of T.V.Rasulova, the teacher of ethnic classes. The residents of the house where they were going to give the girls an apartment wrote a letter to the Mayor of the city of Vorkuta, demanding that the girls should not be registered in this house. The request was complied with. The house is to be pulled down. Afterwards, the timber will be taken away to central or to southern Russia; this is what they already did to another wooden house. The building has undergone capital construction repairs and has excellent apartments with high ceilings. Today, only two families remain in this 12-apartment house.

Despite the fact that kindergarten staff with a commission of teaching the Nenets language are needed in kindergarten No. 110, director I.A. Ponomarenko declined to employ the girls. Although the decision of Mr. Shpektor, head of Administration of the city of Vorkuta, was positive, the girls received neither housing nor jobs.

6. Orphan problem

There are some children on the tundra, which lost their parents, for instance, the children of Darya Laptander. Four children were left without a mother. The family lived in the Sovetskiy village because they had no reindeer. Now, the children are on the tundra with their father – they live with the family of Nikolay Ledkov, but this is the third family where the orphans have been placed. They applied to the administration – directly to E. Abuzyarova, but their problem has not been solved. The house where that family lived is nailed up, and the sewerage is out of order. They did not want to live in the apartment where their mother died. In autumn, before the death of Darya, they found the corpse of the Nenets Misha Valey in the vacant neighbouring apartment. And before that, under the windows of the nailed-up apartment, they found the corpse of Misha's brother Mitrofan.

7. Organisation of militia work on controlling crime and hooliganism in the Vorkuta District.

Out of the 40 families living in the Vorkuta District, 20 are destitute. Andrey Valey, for instance, has four sons, out of whom three died. One died of hypothermia, and two others died under unclear circumstances. Two persons were stabbed and killed in the village – Prokopii Laptander and Aleksey Ledkov. The Valey brothers - Mitrofan and Mikhail - died under unknown circumstances.

During the five years the reindeer herders stayed in the village, they were robbed by hooligans. Traps were set on their way, i.e., the road is barred with barbed wire. Reindeer herders are attacked, food and pelts are stolen, etc.

8. Medical Service

On the tundra reindeer herders do not have medical service, except at emergency. Despite the decree issued by Yu.A. Spiridonov to the effect that a helicopter should be leased during the flood (15 hours per year) to transport indigenous people, the helicopter time is not made use of.

The children have not been vaccinated. For instance, Gennady Laptander (born 1985) had chickenpox. Doctors did not attend him to, and the disease has complicated – the boy's body is a complete mass of abscesses. This is only one single example.

9. Veterinary Service

Animals have not been vaccinated. The meat sold to reindeer herders is often inedible. Dogs die from canine plague and other diseases.

10. The question of mother and child room should be solved

As they come for food and children's welfare, reindeer herders bring young children. They have no housing in the Sovetskiy village, have to sit on the snow with cradles at a temperature –45°C.

Some reindeer herders have parasitic diseases. Young children have not been vaccinated or medically examined.

11. Organisation of ethnic boarding school

The transportation of Nenets children to the tundra and back to the Sovetskiy village for the beginning of the school year is not organised. The children are brought as late as in the beginning of November because of lack of transport. In early April, they are already taken back to their tents. This is disadvantageous for their studies. They spend part of the five months' time in hospital due to poor health. These are mainly the children of health categories II and III.

At school there is a language barrier between the teacher and the children.

For instance, Kolya Ledkov made Dorofei Taibari take in antibiotics. As a result, the child was poisoned. This demonstrates that ethnic specialists should be trained. In the respective school there are no persons speaking the Nenets language.

In 2000 (January 10 and 11) the teacher of the native language T.V. Rasulova was dismissed on unjustified grounds from kindergarten No. 110, and currently there is not a single worker who could communicate with children in the Nenets language. No work is done with parents, which results in inadequate behavior of parents and children, since they do not understand or do not know the Russian language. In 1999 Dima Taibari was drowned when he was away from his family. The kindergarten staff had sent the boy to the wrong family for vacation.

In the spring of the same year, Kolya Laptander roamed about between the Sovetskiy village and the tent of Ivan Ledkov. He was always wet and begged for bread. Together with the children of Darya Laptander (Sasha and Vanya), they walked about scrap heaps, and they were not admitted to a kindergarten.

If the administrator of the school-kindergarten would have been a person with a higher education and caring for his/her nation, such incidents would not have happened. I.A. Ponomarenko has no higher education, but only an incomplete musical education. In the course of two years people have been asking for teachers to be invited from the Yamalo-Nenetskiy Okrug or the Nenetskiy Autonomous Okrug to work with the Nenets children. The only answer of the administration is "we have our own specialists available". This year, they employed a speech therapist with no knowledge of the Nenets language.

12. Implementation of the decree issued by Yu.A. Spiridonov, whose contractor is the cooperative "Olenevod".

In relation to self-employed reindeer herders, not a single item of this decree is implemented.

In 1997, the administration of the Sovetskiy village handed 100-200 rubles to each person, while the rest of the amount – 50,000 rubles – was deposited to the savings account of Nadezhda Belkina at interest. The head of the administration, Roza Soroka, explained that "they could not be given much money, because they will booze it away".

We wish to approach you with a request to visit us with a commission for investigation into the social status of reindeer herders, the residents of the Vorkuta District and the Sovetskiy village. We would also appreciate your helping us to set up a public organisation or a branch of RAIPON in the Vorkuta District for work with reindeer herders, fishermen and other indigenous people here.

Respectfully, on behalf of reindeer herders, fishermen, hunters and residents of the Sovetskiy village,
Tatyana Rasulova"

The above documents about the status of the Nenets in the Vorkuta Region of the Komi Republic cover a half-year period. It is appalling to know that during this time members of a small group of Nenets suffered

and died at the sight of the residents of Vorkuta and the Sovetskiy village.

Obviously, it is necessary to organise a commission of the RF Ministry of Federative and Ethnic Af-

fairs, with the participation of the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs of the Komi Republic and other ministries and agencies to investigate the current situation on the spot. The Commission should include representatives of the Human Rights Commission of the President of

the Russian Federation, RAIPON, the Association of the Nenets People “Yasavey”, and the Association of the Indigenous Peoples of the Yamalo-Nenetskiy Autonomous Okrug “Yamal to our Descendants”.

The Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) is calling upon all appropriate administrative bodies to investigate the situation in the Vorkuta District of the Komi Republic and protect the rights of Russian citizens – the Vorkuta Nenets.