



# **Forests and the Biodiversity Convention**

**Independent Monitoring of the  
Implementation of the Expanded Programme  
of Work  
in Russia**

**Friends of the  
Siberian Forests**



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Friends of the Siberian Forests, Krasnoyarsk.

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**Cover:**

Birch-pine forests, one of the most natural forest types in Russia.

Krasnoyarsk in Central Siberia, Russia

Photographer: Andrey Laletin.

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is a result of an independent monitoring process to assess how the government of the Russian Federation is implementing the Expanded Program of Work on Forest Biological Diversity under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. Russia ratified CBD in 1995, thus manifesting the continuation and intensification of its existing activities in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. In full understanding of Cross-Sectoral and changeable character of the issue of compliance with obligations under the Convention, on July 1, 1995, the RF Government issued a special resolution to establish the Cross-Sectoral Commission for Biological Diversity Conservation. This Commission consists of the Deputy Ministers (top managers) of the involved federal executive bodies and representatives of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The Cross-Sectoral Commission for Biodiversity Conservation distributes responsibilities for the fulfillment of the Convention's obligations among relative ministries and agencies according to their roles.



*Early spring, Krasnoyarsk in Central Siberia, Russia*

Friends of the Siberian Forests (FSF) were identified as the country monitor for the Russian Federation. The research process started in March 2007 with the gathering of data and analysis of the base-line information. A questionnaire was developed by the GFC steering committee for this project. This questionnaire formed the basis of the review and on April 2007 it was translated into Russian and sent to more than 70 addresses: to government officials, NGOs, Indigenous Peoples (IPs), private companies and academia. 21 responses were received back. Information from many of those responses was used for writing of this report. In addition, more than ten interviews with relevant experts were made during the research period. Those interviews provided lots of useful information. On July 26, 2007 in the House for Scientists of Krasnoyarsk Friends of the Siberian Forests organized a national workshop concerning the implementation of the CBD/POW in Russia.

The narrative monitoring report for Russia combines research results, outcomes from the national workshop and the answers to the questionnaires and interviews.

The Russian Federation, located in, Eastern Europe and Northern Asia, is the world's largest country in terms of area (17 097 610 km<sup>2</sup>). It accounts for more than one-fifth of the world's total area of forests (851 million hectares). Largely, this consists of the northern boreal forest, with mixed and broad-leaved forest to the south. Coniferous species make up 80 percent of the volume of growing stock, with larch the predominant species over much of Siberia; other important species are Norway spruce and Scots pine to the west, and other species of spruces, pines and firs in Siberia. Russia is one of the largest producers and exporters of industrial round wood in the world. The country also exports significant volumes of sawn wood, plywood, pulp and paper. The Russian forest industry is almost completely privatized, while the forests remain state-owned.

The first term to use for studying Russian forest management system is so-called *Forest Fund*. Originally it just meant all forest and related lands under governmental jurisdiction. Because ALL forests were state owned in the former Soviet Union (and currently in the RF) the *Forest Fund* theoretically just included all Russian forests. The Russian Federation Forest Code (1997) established federal ownership of forest lands. Civil legislation and the Forest Code of the Russian Federation guarantee the right of free access to the forests for all citizens. Forest Fund sites are allowed to be: leased, gratuitously used, short-term used and granted in concessions to both individuals and organizations. Since 01.01.2007, the rights of forest use were transferred from the federal to the regional level.

From 2002 to the time of writing this report, Russia was going through a structural reorganization. Before 2007, there were nearly 3500 state forest enterprises ("leskhoses") that specialized in logging and processing. According to the new Forest Code (2006) they all will be dissolved. Municipal forest enterprises ("lesnichestva") will replace them. The "lesnichestva" will be forbidden to cut and process timber. They will manage and protect forests on behalf of the state.

There are currently more than 33 thousand various companies that specialize in logging and processing, as well as trading of forest products. Nowadays, almost all forest harvesting operations are privatized.

Before 2003 Russian forestry authorities denied that illegal logging existed in the RF. The Ministerial conference of Europe and Northern Asia countries on forest law enforcement and governance (ENA FLEG) that took place in November 2005 in Saint-Petersburg (North-western Russia) became a turning point. Since that conference the Russian government has put some effort into eliminating illegal logging. Presently in Russia, detection, suppression and prevention activities are carried out as a part of a joint plan (between 9 authorized agencies) to fight illegal logging and trade in illegally derived products.

Third party forest certification (by the scheme of the Forest Stewardship Council –FSC) has evolved very fast in Russia during the last few years. In the middle of 2002 there were only 3 certificates of forest management (with a certified territory of less than 1 million ha) and only 4 certificates for Chain of Custody. As of May 1, 2007 there were 43 forest management certificates (with a certified territory of more than 16, 7 million ha) and 50 certificates for Chain of Custody.

Ecotourism is not well formulated in Russia. But during the last 5 years several groups of Indigenous Peoples have worked together with the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) and the Center for Support of Indigenous Peoples of the North (CSIPN) to bring foreign ecotourists to Indigenous communities.

Preparation of the Russian National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (for 2002-2017) and Action Plan (for 2002-2007) was completed in 2001 and implementation started in 2002. This includes the following directions:

1. **Development of the system of protected areas in the RF.**
2. **Development of the system of protected areas on the borders of the RF.**
3. **Generation of an integral system of biodiversity conservation management.**
4. **Improvement of the legislative base.**
5. **Improvement of Russian international activities in biodiversity conservation.**
6. **Development of openness of biodiversity status information and provision**
7. **of equal access to biological resources.**
8. **Creation of the informational space for biodiversity conservation management.**
9. **Improvement of biodiversity conservation economic and financial mechanisms.**

With the exception of direction 7, none of the tasks were fulfilled.

In 2002 the Russian Government adopted the Concept of Development of Russian Forests for 2003-2010. Many of the proposals from the CBD/POW were included into that Concept. But not many experts could give examples of actual implementation of this Concept. Most people that knew about this concept noted bad implementation of it. Interviewed IP representatives mentioned that during the last 5 years, the situation of forest protection and IP's rights has deteriorated. But government representatives interviewed considered that the situation with forests and IPs during the last 5 years had either improved or was the same as in 2002. Most of the interviewees noted that the CBD/POW had almost no influence on the situation of forests and forest peoples in Russia.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

In preparation for the Ninth Conference of Parties (COP-9) to the CBD, in May 2008 in Germany, the Global Forest Coalition (GFC) has embarked on an international independent review of progress made in the implementation of the CBD with regard to the Expanded Program of Work (CBD/POW) on Forest Biological Diversity. The review process consists of 20 country reports in the North and South. When deciding to adopt this CBD/POW, the COP-6 of the CBD 'invited' Parties, Governments, NGOs, international and regional organizations, etc. to address:

- The need to focus on key priorities for sustainable use of forest resources and the equitable sharing of benefits;
- The need to facilitate adequate participation of indigenous and local communities and the need to respect their rights and interests;
- The need for urgent conservation action for forests that are ecologically significant and/or most important for biological diversity on national and regional scales, in accordance with national priorities, where forest biodiversity loss or threats of loss are significant or of great concern, but also to work to enhance conservation in all types of forests, both within and outside protected areas;
- The need to achieve synergies and avoid duplications between the work of the key international instruments and bodies, such as the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests;
- The need to ensure capacity-building and the provision of adequate financial, human and technical resources to allow implementation of the work programme by all relevant stakeholders;
- The need to ensure that relevant activities be effectively incorporated into national and sub national forest and biological diversity strategies and programmes;
- The need for clarification of the links between the ecosystem approach and sustainable forest management.

GFC pays special attention to understanding the influence of international and national underlying causes of forest loss and degradation in order to assign clear responsibilities in the processes driving forest loss and degradation. The outcome of the review of implementation of the POW will be presented and discussed at COP-9.

Friends of the Siberian Forests (FSF) were identified as the country monitor for the Russian Federation (RF). The research process started in March 2007 with the gathering of data and analysis of base-line information. Research was based on a participatory process, involving individuals from communities and/or organizations with experience in research projects. A questionnaire was developed by the GFC steering committee for this project. This committee consisted of experts from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and indigenous peoples (IPs) and the questionnaire was developed to facilitate the assessment and to generate comparable information in each country. This questionnaire formed the basis of the review and on April 2007 it was translated into Russian and sent to more than 70 addresses: to government officials, NGOs, IPs, private companies and academia. 21 responses were received back. Information from many of those responses was used for writing of this report. Also more than ten interviews with relevant experts were made during the research period. Those

interviews gave lots of useful information. On July 26, 2007 in the House for Scientists of Krasnoyarsk Friends of the Siberian Forests organized a national workshop concerning implementation of the CBD/POW in Russia.

The Russian Federation federal law "On international treaties of the Russian Federation" emphasizes that international treaties of the RF along with globally recognized principles and norms of international law are an integral part of its legal system in concord with the RF Constitution. Russia ratified the CBD in 1995, thus manifesting the continuation and intensification of its existing activities in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. In full understanding of the cross-sectoral and changeable character of the issue of compliance with obligations under the Convention, on July 1, 1995, the RF Government issued a special resolution to establish the Cross-Sectoral Commission for Biological Diversity Conservation. The Commission consists of Deputy Ministers (top managers) of concerned federal executive power bodies and representatives of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The Cross-Sectoral Commission for Biodiversity Conservation distributed responsibilities for the fulfillment of the Convention's obligations among relative ministries and agencies according to their functions and roles.

The monitoring report for Russia combines research results, outcomes from the national workshop and the answers to the questionnaires and interviews.

### **3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL, GEOPHYSICAL AND SOCIOECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION (RF)**

The Russian Federation, located in Eastern Europe and Northern Asia, is the world's largest country in terms of area (17 097 610 km<sup>2</sup>). In the north Russia is bordered by extensions of the Arctic Ocean: the Barents, Kara, Laptev, East Siberian, and Chukchi seas. In the east the country is bordered by the Pacific Ocean and several of its extensions: the Bering Strait (which separates Russia from Alaska), the Bering Sea, the Sea of Okhotsk, and the Sea of Japan. In the extreme south-east Russia abuts the northeastern tip of North Korea. In the south it is bordered by China, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and the Black Sea. In the south-west it is bordered by Ukraine and on the west by Belarus, Latvia, Estonia, the Gulf of Finland, and Finland. In the extreme north-west, Russia is bordered by Norway. Russia can be divided into the following broad geographic regions. From east to west there are the European plain; the Ural Mountains; the mountain systems and ranges along much of Russia's southern border; as well as the lowlands and uplands of Siberia, including the West Siberian Plain, the Central Siberian Plateau, and the mountain ranges of north-eastern Siberia.

Russia has many rivers, the longest of which lie in Siberia. The Lena River, the longest one, is 4 400 km long. The Lena, like the Ob and Yenisey rivers, empties into the Arctic Ocean. The Volga River, the longest river in European Russia, originates north-west of Moscow and flows 3 531 km to the Caspian Sea (FAO official website).

Two-thirds of the forests are available for wood supply; most of the remainder is not used for economic reasons (accessibility). The Russian Federation is one of the largest producers and exporters of industrial round wood in the world. The country also exports significant volumes of sawn wood, plywood, pulp and paper. Total forest product exports valued almost US\$3.9 billion in 2001 (Rosyiskiy statisticheskiy ezhegodnik; Stat. Sb. M: Goskomstat Rossii, 2002). The Russian forest industry is almost completely privatized, while the forests remain state-owned. Hunting and the collection of a wide range of non-wood forest products are very important for local populations. Russian forests are an invaluable source of wild fruits and berries, nuts and mushrooms, medicinal plants and herbs, honey, fodder and forage, resins, oils and game meats.

#### 4. CHARACTERIZATION OF FORESTS OCCURRING IN THE RF

The Russian Federation accounts for more than one-fifth of the world's total area of forests (851 million hectares). A large part consists of the northern boreal forest, with mixed and broad-leaved forest to the south. Coniferous species make up 80 percent of the volume of growing stock, with larch the predominant species over much of Siberia; other important species are Norway spruce and Scots pine to the west, and other species of spruces, pines and firs in Siberia. Within the coniferous group, the greatest area belongs to the Larch predominant stands of Siberia and the Far East (more than half of the total area of the coniferous group). Pine trees occupy 23% and spruce trees 15% of the area. The major tree species that make up the forests in the Russian Federation are larch, pine, Siberian pine, spruce, oak, beech, birch and aspen. The above species constitute some 90% of all the forested area of the Russian Federation. Other tree species (such as pear, chestnut, and walnut) occupy an area of less than one million ha and shrubs (such as *Pinus pumila*) cover the remaining area. All of the forests forming species are clustered into three groups: the coniferous group (79%), hardwoods (2%), and softwoods (19%). Taken as a whole, these areas, which are covered by these major tree species, have remained quite stable during the last decades. The decrease in the area of Oak stands in the European part of Russia is the only exception. The decrease was caused by unsatisfactory pathological conditions resulting from natural processes and also by anthropogenic factors. (Russia's first report on the Montreal process criteria and indicators, 2003).

**Table 1. Extent of forest and other wooded land**

FRA 2005 categories	Area (1000 hectares)		
	1990	2000	2005
Forest	808,950	809,268	808,790
Other wooded land	75,144	72,706	74,185
Forest and other wooded land	884,094	881,974	882,975
Other land	804,756	806,876	805,875
...of which with tree cover	4,820	4,725	4,698
Total land area	1,688,850	1,688,850	1,688,850
Inland water bodies	18,690	18,690	18,690
Total area of country	1,707,540	1,707,540	1,707,540

Data source: FAO, Global Forest Resources Assessment 2005.

**Table 2. Characteristics of forest and other wooded land**

FRA 2005 categories	Area (1000 hectares)					
	Forest			Other wooded land		
	1990	2000	2005	1990	2000	2005
Primary	241,726	258,131	255,470	74,990	71,607	73,169
Modified natural	554,573	535,777	536,358	-	-	-
Semi-natural	-	-	-	0	0	0
Productive plantation	9,244	10,712	11,888	0	0	0
Protective plantation	3,407	4,648	5,075	154	1,099	1,016
Total	808,950	809,269	808,790	75,144	72,706	74,185

Data source: FAO, Global Forest Resources Assessment 2005.



More than half of all the forests in the Russian Federation are growing on the permafrost soils of Siberia and the Far East, a fact that contributes to the rather low productivity of the timber-producing areas of the forests. Only 55% of the total forested area of the Russian Federation is considered to be potentially accessible ecologically or economically. A major part of these forests are located in the North European region and along the Trans-Siberian railway. These are areas that already were intensively logged during the past few decades. According to the 2001 state Forest Fund account, the growing stock of major tree species, which make up the forests in the Russian Federation, is 74.5 billion m<sup>3</sup>, including 41.5 billion m<sup>3</sup> of so called "mature" and "over mature" tree stands with an average growing reserve of some 137 m<sup>3</sup> per hectare. The annual mean volume increment for the total forested area of the entire Russian Federation is estimated to be 871.45 million m<sup>3</sup> (1.34 m<sup>3</sup> per hectare) (Russia's first report on the Montreal process criteria and indicators, 2003).

In State of the World's Forests, 2005, FAO gives the following figures on Russian forests: total forest area in 2000 – 851 392 000 ha that is 50,4% of the land area. Russian population in 2003 was 143 246 000, forest area per capita – 5,8 ha. Population density in 2003 was 8, 5 person/km<sup>2</sup>, annual rate of change in 2000-2005 was -0, 6%. Rural population was 26,7% in 2003. Annual forest cover change in 1990-2000 was around 135 000 ha.

## 5. LAND TENURE REGIME AND FOREST MANAGEMENT SITUATION IN THE RF

The first term you need to understand for studying the Russian forest management system is the so-called *Forest Fund*. Originally it just meant all forest and related lands under governmental jurisdiction. Because ALL forests (as far as any other lands and resources) were state owned in the former Soviet Union (and currently in the RF) the *Forest Fund* theoretically just included all Russian forests ([Russia: forest policy during transition. A World Bank country study. 1997](#)). .

The Russian Federation Forest Code (1997) established federal ownership of forest lands. Civil legislation and the Forest Code of the Russian Federation guarantees the right of free access to the forests for all citizens. Forest Fund sites are allowed to be: leased; gratuitously used; short-term used and granted in concessions to both individuals and organizations. Since 01.01.2007, the management rights of forest use were transferred from the federal to the regional ("oblast" and "krai") level.

Priorities for forest management are identified in the Concept of Forestry Development. The highest priorities are attached to the following goals:

- reforestation of all deforested areas; protection of forests not only against fire and pests but also against human thieves of forest resources in the country, and creation of an enabling environment for efficient forest use.

As regards regulations and guidelines to support these activities, there were substantial changes within 2005-2006, resulting into:

1. altered procedures and arrangements for forest use;
2. 2. a new system of administration and budgeting in forestry; and
3. 3. changed distribution of the powers and responsibilities between the federal centre and regions of the Russian Federation.

In 2007 after the new Forest Code was adopted, reforestation and forest protection became regional functions (and responsibilities, and hence they are to be financed from regional budgets.

## **6. STATUS OF FORESTS AND FOREST PEOPLES BEFORE AND AFTER THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE PROGRAM OF WORK ON FOREST BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD/POW) IN THE RF**

According to the previous Forest Code (1997) all the forests in Russia were divided into three groups according to their economic and environmental functions. Group I forests (20%) carry out protective functions with restricted usage regimes. Group II forests (6%) are located in the areas of high population density and/or low forest resource potential, and maintain strict forest use practices. These forests also carry out protective functions, having limited usage regimes. Group III forests (74%) are located in the forest abundant regions of Russia and are considered of commercial value. These forests are meant to meet economic needs on a constant and sustainable basis by providing timber and at the same time, not undermining forest protection functions. But since 2007, the new Forest Code (2006) cancelled these 3 groups of forests. Instead the following categories of forests were introduced: protected forests (former group I), exploited forests (former group II and part of group III), reserved forests (part of the former group III that will not be exploited during the next 20 years). Also protected forests include specially protected areas that are supervised not by the Federal Forestry Agency, but by the State Environmental Protection Committee (both of them are divisions of the Ministry of Natural Resources).

The federal and regional authorities try to meet wishes and needs of Indigenous Peoples by transferring sites of the forest fund for traditional forest uses. For example, in 1995 an unprecedented transfer of more than 10 million ha of the Forest Fund under the control of the Council of national tribal communities took place in the territory of Sakha Republic (Yakutia). In 1999 the federal law on guaranteeing the rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted. It was designed to enhance the unique nature of the social, economic and cultural development of these peoples and protect their habitats and traditional ways of life, in combination with economic management. In accordance with that law, appropriate agencies have the right to establish boundaries of lands where IPs make traditional use of natural resources and determine the procedure for providing them with lands for these purposes. The federal law "The Territories of Traditional Nature Use by the Native People of Siberia and the Far East" was passed in the year 2001. The territories of traditional nature use were declared to be protected areas. Such areas were created particularly to maintain traditional nature use with special consideration given to the interests and concerns of the native people, many of whom still live in the forests with their traditional life styles.

## **7. COMPARISON OF PREDOMINANT FOREST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (INCLUDING LEGAL FRAMEWORK) BEFORE AND AFTER THE INCEPTION OF THE CBD/POW IN THE RF**

Timber is harvested at the final felling of so called "mature" and "over mature" stands. Various assortments are produced which are needed for both domestic and world markets. A grounded and reasonable volume of timber felled, which is statistically calculated, is referred to as the Annual Allowable Cut (AAC). In the past years, AAC totaled around 500 million m<sup>3</sup>, including 300 million m<sup>3</sup> for the coniferous category. But a large part of the AAC is not economically accessible. So it is better to compare figures relating to accessible forests.

They were the following:

From 2004 – 229 million m<sup>3</sup>, 2005- 237 million m<sup>3</sup> and in 2006 – 252 million m<sup>3</sup>.

From them the following timber volumes were harvested respectively:

In 2004 – 178 million m<sup>3</sup>, in 2005- 184 million m<sup>3</sup> and in 2006 – 190 million m<sup>3</sup>.

(Minister Trutnev U.P, 24.05.2007, report at the government meeting).

In 2002-2007 Russia is going through structural reorganization. The forest sector has started to move its production facilities to the regions with higher consumption levels and those, which

are located closer to foreign markets. Thus, based on the economic reasons, North Western, Northern, Central and Western parts of Russia have been prioritized for forest use and development. The most significantly low AAC use is found in the forest abundant areas of Siberia and the Far East. The most favorable economic conditions are created in the European part of Russia, where the AAC is used at 60-90%, in connection with the coniferous category. In the year 2001, about 2.9 thousand allotments were leased, covering the area of 90 million ha and having an annual logging volume of 123.5 million m<sup>3</sup> (Filipchuk A.N. *Obschie tendentsyi ustoichivogo upravlenija lesami i lesopol'zovanija // Lesokhozjaistvennaja informatsija*. M: VNYLM, 2002).

Before 2007, there were nearly 3500 state forest enterprises ("leskhoses") that specialized in logging and processing. According to the new Forest Code (2006) they all will be dismissed. Municipal forest enterprises ("lesnichestva") will substitute them. For "lesnichestva" will be forbidden to cut and process timber. They will manage and protect forests on behalf of the state. There are more than 33 thousand various companies that specialize in logging and processing, as well as trading. Nowadays, almost all forest harvesting operations are



*Birch-pine forests, Krasnoyarsk in Central Siberia, Russia*

privatized. The most steady and reliable tenants are those, who have a vertical integrated structure that is established on the basis of the centralization of financial flows, market activities and maintenance, which covers the full technological cycle, beginning at the felling site to ending with the final product. Each of these includes a number of logging enterprises. By integrating with forest management units, these companies provide raw materials, thereby investing into the renovation of logging enterprises. It shows the growing interest that large owners have in the area of efficient development and maintenance.

Before 2003 Russian forestry authorities denied problem of illegal logging in the RF. Ministerial conference of Europe and Northern Asia countries on forest law enforcement and governance (FLEG) that took place in November 2005 in Saint-Petersburg (North-western Russia) became a turning point. Since that Russian government put lots of efforts to eliminate illegal logging. Presently in Russia the detection, suppression and prevention activities are carried out as a part of a joint plan (between 9 authorized agencies) to fight illegal logging and trade of illegally derived products, which is aimed at reinforcement of control of transportation, implementation and processing of timber and derived products.

## **8. HOW MARKET-BASED CONSERVATION MECHANISMS (FSC CERTIFICATION, ECOTOURISM, PAYMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES) INTERFERE WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CBD/POW.**

Third party forest certification (by the scheme of the Forest Stewardship Council –FSC) is developed very fast in Russia during last years. In the middle of 2002 there were only 3 certificates of forest management (with certified territory less than 1 million ha) and only 4 certificates for Chain of Custody. As of May 1, 2007 there were already 43 forest management certificates (with certified territory more than 16, 7 million ha) and 50 certificates for Chain of Custody (web site [www.forest.ru](http://www.forest.ru)). FSC certification is a good mechanism to involve biodiversity conservation into current forestry practices. Also it helps to pay attention on Indigenous Peoples (Principle 3 of FSC) and on High Conservation Value Forests (Principle 9 of

FSC). There are almost no plantations (Principle 10 of FSC) in Russia, which makes lots of problems of FSC implementation in tropical and sub-tropical countries. There were some critical points from some interviewed people concerning few places of FSC certification. But most of interviewed people and the workshop participants thought that FSC implementation in Russia helps to implement CBD/POW.

Russian National Council on Forest Certification supported by Russian Forestry Agency (RFA) was established in 2003. Its main task is participation in the PEFC scheme certification. Criteria and Indicators (C&I) for sustainable forest management for RF were approved in 1997. Since mid-90's Russia is a member of the Pan-European and also Montreal processes of C&I that give a basis for forest certification on PEFC system. In 2004 two different standards for PEFC certification were developed in Russia by two different National Councils on Forest Certification (another one was established by timber industry and is much more conservative and harmful for forests than the Council supported by the RFA). In 2006 both Councils developed an umbrella Council that was accepted in the PEFC Council. NGOs and IPs do not support PEFC certification and without their support and with competition between two Russian Councils there will be no serious results in PEFC certification in Russia. So far PEFC did not start active work in Russia. Probably this certification scheme will not help much in implementation of the CBD/POW in Russia.

Ecotourism is not developed much in Russia. But during the last 5 years several groups of Indigenous Peoples (in Sakha Republic, Sakhalin and Kamchatka regions) worked together with the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON) and Center for Support of Indigenous Peoples of the North (CSIPN) to bring foreign ecotourists to Indigenous communities. Because of small impact on nature and additional economic resources for local communities, such influence of ecotourism was estimated positively by all interviewed people.

## **9. ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (THE WORLD BANK, UN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION, UN CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT, WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION, AND OTHER RELEVANT REGIONAL ONES) IN HELPING COUNTRIES IMPLEMENTING THE CBD/POW IN THE RF**

This issue became the most difficult for interviewed people. Most of them did not know an answer on it and were not aware on any help from the mentioned international institutions on implementation of CBD/POW in Russia. Russia is not a member of the World Trade Organization. UN Conference on Trade and Development does not help at all to implement CBD/POW in Russia. Russia became a member of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) only in April 2006 and FAO did not help yet to Russia to implement CBD/POW or other CBD related agreements.

The World Bank has now an active Forest Project in Russia since 2000. But the focus of that project is purely concentrated on the forestry sector not on biodiversity. The World Bank focuses in 3 pilot regions: Leningrad oblast (European Russia), Krasnoyarsk krai (Siberia) and Khabarovsk krai (Russian Far East). For all these pilot regions the World Bank proposed changes in regional legislation to make easier access of timber industry to forest resources. There are no environmental or social benefits from this World Bank project in Russia, but purely economic benefits and mostly for large companies. The World Bank has also another active project in Russia. It is environmental management project (since 1994). This Environmental Management Project (EMP) should provide critical support to the Environmental Framework Program (EFP) whose major objectives are to incorporate environmental and natural resources management concerns directly into the economic, social and political adjustment process, and strengthen financial delivery mechanism ([www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)).

And for the CBD/POW implementation in Russia interviewed experts evaluated the role of the World Bank from neutral to negative. Nobody evaluated its role as positive.

## **10. ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES OCCURRING IN THE RF SINCE THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE CBD/POW**

Preparation of the Russian National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (for 2002-2017) and Action Plan (for 2002-2007) were completed in 2001 and started to be implemented in 2002. It includes the following directions:

### **1. Development of the system of protected areas in the RF.**

Herein the core areas of the strategy is: increasing a share of 'zapovedniks' (this Russian word means the protected area of

The highest status type of nature reserve) and national parks area to 3% of the territory of Russia and generating regional ecological networks of protected areas. This task was not fulfilled during last 5 years.

### **2. Development of the system of protected areas in the borders of the RF.**

After the collapse of the former USSR, an integral system of protected areas was also broken. Current strategy of Russia in this sphere focuses on the restoration of links and the integral system. It is feasible through the creation of bilateral cross-border zapovedniks and national parks along the borders with Belarus, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Georgia, etc. But this task also was not fulfilled.

### **3. Generation of the integral system of biodiversity conservation management.**

The creation of a legislative base for biodiversity conservation is currently being completed. Among strategic objectives, the following should be singled out: publishing of a new edition of the Red

Data Book of Russia, monitoring of the status of rare animal and plant species populations, fulfilling of CBD obligations by Russia along with obligations under other international conventions and agreements (including CITES, Wetlands (Ramsar) Convention, UNESCO World Heritage Convention, etc.). A representative range of biota on protected areas is still rather narrow. Therefore, the key area of the national biodiversity conservation strategy is establishing an appropriate regime to ensure the conservation and reproduction of rare species in their habitats. But this task also was not fulfilled.

### **4. Improvement of the legislative base.**

There are envisaged certain actions to accelerate the adoption of laws important for fulfilling the CBD obligations, namely "On flora", "On hunting", etc. The key initiator of the development and adoption of new environmental laws should be the RF Government. As for legislative efforts, changes should be made by the Committee on Ecology, Natural Resources and Nature Use under *Gosduma* (Russian Parliament). The strategy of the legislative activities suggests completing the adoption of baseline laws and creation of a standing order for their enforcement on each executive level.

New legislation in the biodiversity conservation is forecast to be developed through the coming 10 years. But during the last 5 years nothing was done in Russia to improve nature conservation.

### **5. Improvement of Russian international activities in the biodiversity conservation.**

Key strategic goals will be efficient partnerships in conventions: CBD, CITES, World Cultural and Natural Heritage, etc., participation in the Strategy of Landscape and Biological Diversity Conservation, preparation of bilateral and multilateral agreements with countries having common conservation interests with Russia in individual regions (Caspian, Baltic, Black Sea, etc.). The Asian region where the Pan-Asian strategy may be applied offers prospects for expanding Russia's international CBD activities. For the last 5 years the top priority area was promotion of biodiversity conservation cooperation with the CIS countries. But this task also was not fulfilled.

#### **6. Development of ideas of the openness of biodiversity status information and provision of equal access to biological resources.**

The strategy lies in the combination of state and public control over the status of biodiversity, support to ecological protections and strengthening of mass media activities in this sphere. This unit also includes ecological education in the field of biodiversity conservation. But this task also was not fulfilled.

#### **7. Creation of the informational space for biodiversity conservation management.**

Like 5 years ago, currently a system of information support to nature protection also does not exist in Russia. Although an Informational-Analytical Centre was established in Moscow (that includes biodiversity database), a wide regional respondents' network for collecting, analyzing and communicating information in managerial decision was not established.

#### **8. Improvement of biodiversity conservation economic and financial mechanisms.**

Today's strategy consists of upgrading old economic mechanisms and creating new ones to provide economic evaluation (cost) of natural resources, efficiency of environment investments and economic incentives for fulfilling the CBD obligations. Core strategic actions included training of young economists with a new way of thinking and advanced knowledge. But this task also was not fulfilled.

The total number of protected areas of federal and regional importance is 13,628 (source: The 2005 State Report on the Environmental Status and Protection in the Russian Federation). The total coverage of protected areas, including marine areas, reaches 210,101,200 ha, with land extent covering 200,255,700 ha, accounting for approximately 11.7% of the Russian Federation territory. In 2002 Russia's specially protected areas included 35 national parks (6.9 million hectares), a large number of natural monuments, 65 federal "zapovedniks" (nature reserves) (12.8 million hectares) and 45 regional "zapovedniks" (45 million hectares). Since 2002 till September 2007 only one "zapovednik" and 4 national parks were established.

## **11. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION OF FOREST AND FOREST PEOPLES IN THE RF BEFORE AND AFTER THE INCEPTION OF THE CBD/POW**

In 2002 Russian Government adopted the Concept of Development of Russian Forests for 2003-2010. Many proposals from the CBD/POW were included into that Concept. But not many interviewed experts could give examples of actual implementation of this Concept. Most of people that knew about this concept noted bad implementation of this Concept. Many experts mentioned decentralization of the forest management in Russia that started in 2007 after adoption of the New Forest Code (2006), but it is very difficult to foresee will this change be positive or negative for forests and forest peoples of Russia.

The National Strategy of Biodiversity Conservation in Russia envisages a comprehensive list of objectives to ensure respect, preservation and maintenance of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of Indigenous and local communities reflecting their traditional

lifestyles and having importance for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. The current national legislation in this regard (the basis is given by the Federal Law #82-FZ "About guaranties to Indigenous Peoples of the Russian Federation" from April 30, 1999 and the Federal Law #49-FZ "About territories of traditional nature use of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East of the Russian Federation" from May 7, 2001 with changes from June 26, 2007) generally corresponds with the international norms in many aspects and considers lifestyles specific to Indigenous Peoples, recognizing traditional dependence of Indigenous population upon the environment. Several representatives of IPs mentioned such new pieces of legislation like "List of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East of the Russian Federation" (Decision of the Russian government #536-r from 17.04.2006). But representatives of IPs that were interviewed or participated in the national workshop noted that the actual implementation of these generally good pieces of legislation is often very poor and gives priorities to oil, gas, timber or mining industries against interests of IPs.

In April 10, 2007 situation with IPs in Russia was discussed in the *Gosduma*, the lower chamber of the Russian Parliament. It was noted that the number of Indigenous Peoples in Russia that time was 1 million 350 thousand people. Only for the last 3 years it has reduced on 200 thousand people or 14 %. This is what the deputy chairman of the Committee of the Gosduma on Natural Resources and Land use, Vladimir Kashin, told during his Round Table Report "Providing Rights of Indigenous Peoples of Russia on Traditional Living and Protection of Habitat when developing and Exercising Legislation on Natural Resources" held on 10 April, 2007. Especially intensive is the reduction of the population of Indigenous Peoples in Altaisky Krai, Magadan, Sakhalin and Tomsk Oblasts and Chukotka Autonomous Okrug. In Chukotka Autonomous Okrug the population has reduced three times in comparison with 1990. The number of people dying 1.5 times exceeds the number of being born, and in some regions 2 and more times. Infant mortality in the majority of the regions many times exceeds the average rate in Russia. The analysis of the indices of living standards shows that in the regions where of Indigenous Peoples live the most part of the population nowadays lives worse than in 1990 and worse than in other regions of Russia. V. Kashin considered demanding from the President and from the Government that they pay the most serious attention to the distress of Indigenous Peoples.

Numerous Indigenous Peoples are being involved and their knowledge and practices used more widely in the regional management system of the social and economic development, which promotes biodiversity conservation as well. At the federal and local levels, Indigenous People's organizations (IPOs) have been influential enough to advocate actively interests of Indigenous Peoples. Activities of these organizations promote the development of traditional land management and preservation of traditional knowledge. Interviewed IP representatives mentioned that during the last 5 years situation with forest protection and IP's rights became deteriorated. But interviewed government representatives considered that situation with forests and IPs during the last 5 years either improved or was the same as in 2002. But most of the interviewed people noted that there was almost no influence of the CBD/POW into the situation with forests and forest peoples in Russia.

## 12. CONCLUSION

Independent monitoring process assessing how the Russian government implements CBD/POW went well. There was less interest from the government officials (only 2 questionnaires went back), but NGOs, researchers and IPs were quite active and provided lots of useful information. Additional interviews and national workshop were very useful for this report. Workshop participants listened and discussed 4 reports concerning implementation of the CBD/POW in Russia from different points of view: government official, academia researcher, NGO activist and representative from indigenous community. There was a very fruitful and hot discussion that helped workshop participants to understand different arguments and look at the complex issue of the CBD/POW implementation from different points of view.

The following lessons could be learnt from this independent monitoring process:

1. Using questionnaire and additional interviews give lots of useful information.
2. Questionnaire and monitoring methodology should be adjusted for the country under research.
3. Involving people from different sectors (government, NGO, IPs, academia, etc.) and from different levels (federal, regional and local) is extremely useful.
4. It was very good exercise to compare the situation with forest biodiversity program of CBD during last 5 years (I made a similar research for CBD COP-6 in 2002). It would be very useful to make similar review also for the COP-10 of the CBD, monitoring implementation of the 2010 target.
5. The most difficult question for the interviewed people in Russia was an issue on involvement of international institutions into CBD/POW implementation. It would be useful to identify relevant people in such institutions and send them questionnaires (or make special interviews with them) in future.
6. If questionnaires will be sent to the Russian Minister for Natural Resources from abroad, it will increase a chance to get official responses from him (we did not get an official response this time, but only 2 responses from government officials of regional level).
7. It would be useful to involve mass media in future.

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