

Borders and beyond

In this edition BREN travels to and beyond the Russian borders for inspiration.

Extending for 57,792km, the Russian border is the world's longest. Along the 20,139km land frontier, Russia has boundaries with 14 countries. These include eight states which were formerly part of the Soviet Union: Kazakhstan in Asia and, in Europe, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. Other neighbours include the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), China, Mongolia, Poland, Norway

and Finland. At the far north-eastern extremity, 86km of the Bering Strait separate Russia from the United States and Russia also shares a maritime border with Japan.

Elene Gvilava of Green Way examines the historical relations between Russia and her country, Georgia, with particular reference to the environmental implications. Jesse Smith provides a tantalising account of his expedition to Munku Sardyk, a mountain on the Mongolian border. Alexander Markovsky of SPOK, a Karelian conservation group, outlines the governance problems in relation to

old-growth forests in his region by the border between Russia and Finland. On the Russian-Georgian border Andrey Rudomakha explains the potentially devastating impact to the Sochi National Park of the decision to host the 2014 Winter Olympics there.

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EcoDom

In autumn 2006 an exchange took place between EcoDom, a Novosibirsk-based eco-housing project, and the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) in Wales. A group of students and lecturers from the University of East London and CAT Masters Programme in Advanced Environmental and Energy Studies, as well as a CAT expert in renewable energy, travelled to Russia to take part in a seminar on 'Alternative Energy and Eco-Housing in Siberia', funded by the British Council. As well as presenting the work they are doing in the UK, they met representatives from several Russian universities and regional government officials from Novosibirsk.

They also had the opportunity to visit the EcoDom project, based near Akademgorodok, just outside Novosibirsk, where several eco-houses have already been built and more are under way. A priority in the cold Siberian climate is good insulation and innovative heat exchangers that do not freeze!

The reverse half of the exchange

Photo: David Hood



happened in November, when three representatives of EcoDom and the Institute of Thermal Physics in Novosibirsk, with which the EcoDom has close links, visited the UK. Igor Ogorodnikov, Valentina Ogorodnikova and Sergei Alekseenko spent several days at CAT and gave a lecture to MSc students there, as well as visiting BedZED and several other eco-building and research projects across the UK. Igor said that a priority for them during the visit was to study a

range of social solutions to alternative and sustainable living, as their project, until now, had focused mainly on technical, energy efficiency questions. The visitors were also surprised to hear of the widespread concern for measuring carbon emissions in the UK, as in Russia the concerns still focus mainly on energy efficiency rather than specifically on carbon.

While at CAT, the four organisations involved in the exchange signed a formal partnership to work on future exchanges of information, ideas and students and agreed to support each other's work over the next five years.

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<http://www.cat.org.uk/msc/home/index.tpl?section=home>

The race for the Caucasus Winter Olympics of discontent 2014?

In July 2007 Russia won its bid to host the 2014 Winter Olympics. The games are therefore set to take place in the southern Russian resort of Sochi in February 2014. Considerable concerns have been expressed about the potential environmental impact of the Games and associated infrastructure projects. The article below is derived largely from material provided by Andrey Rudomakha, Coordinator of North Caucasus Environmental Watch.

In a statement, the Russian bid team said of the 2014 Winter Olympics, "It will be a carbon and waste-free Games that raises awareness and understanding of the environment while protecting the natural beauty of the region around Sochi".

Unfortunately, the plans for Sochi to host the Winter Olympics contradict the noble goals of the Olympic Movement, since they involve severe damage to the unique biological diversity of the North-West Caucasus, the destruction of globally significant natural sites and major violation of Russian environmental legislation. These plans, contrary to the Olympic Charter, do not contribute to "building a better world".

Particular concern about the Olympic developments focuses on Grushovy Ridge, where it is planned to construct the luge/bobsleigh track and the Olympic village. This ridge is part of Sochi National Park, as well as the Sochi Wildlife Refuge (Sochi Zakaznik). A significant part of the ridge forms the buffer zone for the Caucasus Nature Reserve (Caucasus Zapovednik), which is part of the Western Caucasus World Heritage Site.

The Grushovy Ridge area plays a crucial role in the biological conservation of the Western Caucasus. It is crossed by key migration paths of many large mammals, including the brown bear.

The area forms the habitat for many rare and protected species, such as the large-headed water snake (*Natrix megalcephala*), Dinnik's viper (*Vipera dinniki*), the Caucasian banded

Psekhako Ridge where Gazprom has already started constructing a skiing complex. The mountains in the background are part of the Caucasus Nature Reserve and the Western Caucasus World Heritage Site.



newt (*Triturus vittatus ophryticus*), the Caucasian parsley frog (*Pelodytes caucasicus*), the Caucasian toad (*Bufo verrucosissimus*), the common tree frog (*Hyla arborea schelkownikowi*), the European river otter (*Lutra lutra*) and others which are included in the IUCN Red List of endangered species.

Birds will be at risk, as indigenous species, many of which are protected, will be replaced by species typical of human-exploited ecosystems. Furthermore, water pollution and changes in the hydrological system could endanger the habitats and spawning grounds of protected fish species.

The intensive development of the Grushovy Ridge will violate numerous regulations for protected natural areas which prohibit such constructions either in Sochi National Park, Sochi Zakaznik or the Caucasus Reserve buffer zone.

There are plans to develop the ridge with hotel complexes and Olympic facilities, as well as infrastructure elements including several asphalt roads, railways and power lines. Construction of three hydroelectric stations and one reservoir is planned

on the border of the ridge, involving the Mzymta and Pslukh Rivers. All this construction will lead to large-scale felling of old-growth mountain forest. If construction of the luge/bobsleigh track and Olympic village goes ahead as planned, the wildlife of Grushovy Ridge is doomed. The area of land required for the project is 80ha and will involve 56ha of forest being cleared.

The expected capacity of the track is for 11,000 spectators at a time. Total water consumption for various purposes will be approximately 1,700m³ per day. Waste water from the facilities and from the track will also be 1,700m³ per day. The building of treatment facilities for the surface discharge from the track is not envisioned, so it will be drained off directly into the Pslushonok stream.

Plans include the construction of a refrigeration system for the ice surface of the track using ammonia plants (refrigerating plant) and an artificial snow-making system which will use ethylene glycol. The helicopter pad, several car parks and a park for special service vehicles will also be built near the track. An asphalt road and other communications will be connected to it.

Just from this short review of the planned construction it can be seen how serious the effect of building and operating the track on the borders of the World Heritage site will be. The threats to the ecological welfare of the territory implied by the luge/bobsleigh track construction are aggravated by the fact that it is an active mudflow and erosion area and also a zone of high seismic activity (grade 9). Intrusion

into the natural environment could lead to catastrophic landslides, mudflows and floods.

Another serious threat to the preservation of the biological and landscape diversity of the Caucasus eco-region is the development of the Imeretinskaya Lowlands, the only area in Russia where the landscapes and biodiversity of the Colchis wetlands are still preserved. This is an extremely valuable natural resource which plays a very important role in the migration of birds via the Greater Caucasus Range and the Black Sea.

The Adler Airport refurbishment is yet another environmental threat. Operation of the existing airport has been linked with excessive noise impact on the residential area in the vicinity of the airport. With the airport expansion the exposure and unfavorable effect on the health of the city's inhabitants is set to grow.

In addition, there is apprehension about the plans to relocate the course of the Mzymta River which 'prevents' the developers from carrying out the scheduled expansion of the take-off runway. The river is a source of drinking water for Sochi and the spawning grounds for important fish species and so any such large-scale intervention into its eco-system must

be inadmissible.

Environmentalists have recently voiced concern about potential investment by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in infrastructure projects in the Sochi area. Given the environmental threats posed by the Winter Olympics, North Caucasus Environmental Watch has asked the EBRD to consider investing in projects directed at improving the environmental conditions in and around Sochi.

In particular, the Adler domestic waste disposal plant is in critical need of modernisation, as its current condition presents an enormous threat of pollution of coastal areas and sea water. Its impact on Sochi as a health resort is extremely negative. It is known that the EBRD has been considering the possibility of financing a similar project on the southern coast of the Crimea in Ukraine.

But arguably the most critical consequence of the 2014 Winter Olympics project will be the start of further full-scale land development in the Grushovy Ridge area which will result in its total loss as a wildlife area. The hosting of the Games in Sochi is a pretext for real estate development on the Grushovy Ridge. Indeed, the Sochi area is already experiencing a property

boom, with land prices increasing at an extraordinary rate.

Following the recent selection of Russia to host the Winter Olympics, environmental organisations expressed their disappointment that environmental concerns had not been taken into account and North Caucasus Environmental Watch, Greenpeace Russia and WWF have pledged to continue to campaign for changes to the development plans.

Further information

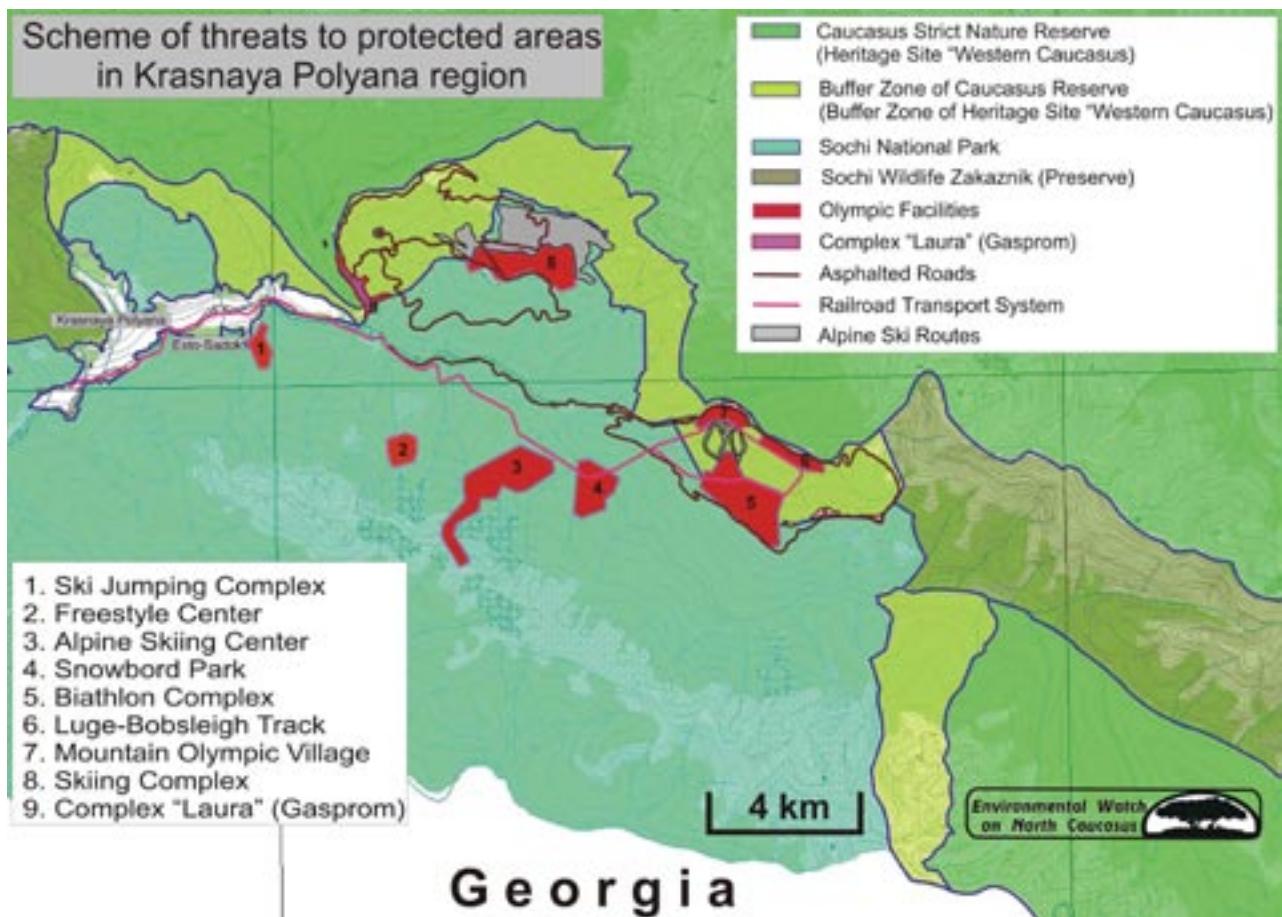
Socio-Ecological Union
www.seu.ru/projects/caucasus/
 (in Russian)

Greenpeace Russia:
www.greenpeace.org/russia/
 (in English and Russian, info under Campaigns, News and World Heritage)

WWF Russia:
www.wwf.ru/resources/news/article/eng/3126
 (Article and further info available in English and Russian)

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Georgia & Russia

Conflict and cooperation



Georgia's state system is 3,000 years old and during this time it has had relations with many neighbouring countries and empires, including the Roman and Byzantine Empires, Turkey, Persia and Russia. Very often these relations have been complicated and full of confrontation.

Relations between Georgia and Russia may be considered from two different perspectives. On the one hand there are the purely political relationships between the states and on the other hand there are the close socio-economic, cultural, scientific and personal relationships.

Historically, active relations between Russia and Georgia began in the 18th century, when Georgia, weakened by internal and foreign wars, was forced to apply to its northern neighbour for military support. The main factor in this decision was a shared religion (Georgia and Russia are both Orthodox Christian countries).

In 1783 a Memorandum known as the Treaty of Georgievsk was signed between Georgia and Russia. According to this treaty, Russia committed to supporting Georgia with military forces against the aggression of the Muslim World.

However, Georgia's powerful ally soon started to use its military forces in a very different way – to increase its power and influence within Georgia itself. Russia abolished the Georgian Royal Dynasty and the 1,500-year-old Autocephaly of the Georgian Church. Eventually Georgia lost its independence and became one of the provinces of the Russian Empire.

Besides the above-mentioned negative elements, this 'union' had positive sides as well. This was mainly reflected in the intensive cultural relationships. Georgia became a very important cultural centre for Russia's intellectual elite (poets,

writers, scientists and public figures). Through Russia Georgia shared Western culture.

After the Russian Revolution of October 1917 and the fall of the Russian Royal Dynasty, Georgia proclaimed its independence, but this only lasted for three years and in 1921 Communist troops again occupied Georgia. As a result, Georgia became one of the Republics of the Soviet Union and a new era in relations between the two countries began, which lasted almost 70 years until the fall of the Soviet system.

During the Soviet period Russia and Georgia had very active cultural and scientific relations. Arguably, the Soviet system had a very intensive influence on the development of many sectors in Georgia (industry, culture, etc.). Likewise Georgian society played an important role in the development of Soviet culture and science (theatre, cinema, art, music, etc.).

This period was also characterised by an increase in several negative influences, particularly in the sphere of environmental problems. The development of industry led to an increased negative impact on the Georgian environment (such as the loss of large areas of land due to the construction of huge hydro-electric power stations and increased atmospheric pollution).

Special note should also be made of the impact on agriculture. The Soviet system was focused on the development of monocultures, which caused the loss of many traditional crops in Georgia and resulted in crucial changes in agricultural practices. Traditional, small-scale family farms disappeared and monocultures were developed, resulting in erosion and the destruction of land.

Since 1991, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the re-establishment of independence in Georgia, a new

phase began in relations between Georgia and Russia. These relations are still characterised by both positive and negative aspects. Although bordering on a powerful country gives Georgia many advantages (good opportunities for business, cultural and scientific relations), it poses certain threats as well (the efforts of 'Big Brother' to preserve and increase its influence, for instance). But in spite of complex relations and a complicated visa regime between Georgia and Russia, the population still maintains traditional economic, cultural, scientific and interpersonal links.

The same is true in the environmental field. It is known that environmental issues know no borders. Therefore for Georgian environmentalists relationships and cooperation with their Russian counterparts is very important. Nowadays many Georgian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have close relations with Russian NGOs.

Our organisation, Green Way, also has active relations and cooperation with various Russian NGOs. One example is the Youth for Peace and Sustainable Development project which was organised in 2005 with the support of the European Youth Foundation. This project aimed to promote conflict prevention and, in this way, contribute to sustainable development in the Caucasus. It involved Armenian, Azerbaijani and Georgian youth organisations, as well as Russian youth organisations, because we believe that the solution to severely strained relations between the governments of two countries lies in maintaining close personal, cultural and scientific relations.

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May Day celebrations on Munku Sardyk

The old van was grey with blotches of rust crawling over its sides. It shook and jolted its way down the uneven chalky road from the town of Irkutsk in Eastern Siberia, past black scorched fields and through dry forest roads, heading south-west towards the Tunka valley and the Mongolian border in the Republic of Buryatia.

At one point we broke from the forest and started the descent down to the village of Kultuk on the southern tip of Lake Baikal, the steel blue lake stretched out in front of us and the smoke from fish barbeques clouding the air as we wound our way towards the Trans-Siberian railway which curved round the banks of the lake and disappeared again off into the hills. With jagged mountains cutting into

the sky to the north and the Irkut River meandering to the south we drove west along the Tunka valley. On the route we passed Buddhist shrines (Buddhism is the religion of the local Buryat people), flat open fields and villages of wooden houses sunk low into the ground. The air was hot and silent, fences bordering paddocks were broken and cattle roamed lazily across the road. Groups of local Buryats, who clustered at bus stops along the route, would gaze at us as we drove past, stare at our dishevelled van and refrain from flagging for a lift.

After eight hours we reached the check point for entry to the border region and had our travel permits stamped. Rattling over the bridge we started our jerky dismount down to the rocky bed of the Irkut River and

parked amongst the boulders next to other cars and jeeps. Up ahead of us the frozen remains of the river twisted its way into the mountains and sparkled aquamarine in the sun. I bent down and started to pack my rucksack with potatoes, biscuits and packets of tea, before hoisting it on to my shoulders and setting off with our group up the frozen river and into the shadows.

I was here with colleagues from the NGO Baikal Environmental Wave, which is based in Irkutsk, the principal town of Eastern Siberia. The May Day period is a traditional holiday time for Russians and sees many people making their way into the countryside, either to spend time at the dacha or to more adventurous places such as where we were headed.

Munku Sardyk, the highest peak in



Eastern Siberia, rises above the Eastern Altai mountain range and gazes out across Mongolia. Nestled halfway up it is a frozen lake, the source of the Irkut River which we had followed from Irkutsk. Over a thousand hikers would make the trip up to the lake over the holiday and take part in the White Irkut folk festival (named after the frozen river) in the forests below the mountain.

What I thought would only be a short trek to a campsite turned into an hour-long hike up the frozen ice into the heart of the forests. The ice was already beginning to melt and the water gurgled underneath the frozen paths, cracked and fissured in places where the snow had finally fallen through and been swept away.

Avoiding these holes we climbed up to the tree line and pitched our tents in the hollows between the roots of the trees, chopping some down to make space and to use the wood for firewood. As night set in we gathered around a big campfire to listen to the folk musicians play guitars and sing, warming our feet by the flames. People sang along with the musicians for hours and then the artists offered their guitars to the crowds and people took it in turns to come forward and play, each one warmly applauded.

The next day we set off after breakfast for the lake. Using our poles to keep balance on the ice we trekked up

the Irkut as it carved into the mountain, clambering over the boulders of fresh rock falls that lay strewn across the path. In the patches where the snow had melted grew yellow snow drops and pink heather and high above I caught sight of a Siberian eagle circling over the white peaks.

The ascent became harder and we had to dig our crampons into the ice and haul ourselves up the steep sides of the mountain. Finally we reached the lake, hidden under the snow, and gazed up at the route to the summit of Munku Sardyk, a trail of climbers stretching up its flanks like a line of ants. Some decided to go on, but most of us without the proper equipment or the experience stayed at the lake and sat looking out over the hills and valleys of Mongolia.

It was a wise decision for there was limited medical help available and a casualty would have to be carried all the way down the mountain before they could be met by an ambulance. The fact that while we were there an experienced hiker died on the slope from a rock fall highlights the importance of safety precautions in a place so far removed from medical services and hospitals.

We stayed for three more days, each day hiking a new trail and every evening listening to folk music round the fire. The air was filled with a strong sense of togetherness and community. People greeted old friends and neighbours on

the slopes and gathered round smaller campfires at night to eat soup and drink vodka.

Beautiful and secret, the Irkut river valley is tucked away from roads and towns, a place still untouched by the wave of commercial tourism that has swamped much of Lake Baikal. As we drove away, I gazed back out of the window of the old van at the mountains silhouetted against the white clouds of chalk dust that flew up behind us, not knowing whether I would ever return, but incredibly happy all the same.

Jesse Smith

Jesse is currently on a six-month European Voluntary Service project at Baikal Environmental Wave. His sending organisation is International Voluntary Service and the project is supported by Look East.

Further information

Baikal Environmental Wave
www.baikalwave.eu.org

International Voluntary Service
www.ivs-gb.org.uk

Look East
www.lookeast.org.uk

News in brief

Chernobyl not 'wildlife haven'

The idea that the exclusion zone, established around the Chernobyl nuclear power plant after one of its reactors exploded in 1986 has created a wildlife haven is not scientifically justified, a study says. This is contrary to recent conclusions by the UN Chernobyl Forum and reports in the popular media concerning the effects of radiation from Chernobyl that the exclusion zone is "...a thriving ecosystem, filled with an increasing number of rare species," as a result of the absence of human activity.

The scientists, Anders Moller of University Pierre and Marie Curie,

France, and Tim Mousseau from the University of South Carolina, US, who assessed the impact of the 1986 disaster on birds said the ecological effects were "considerably greater than previously assumed".

The study, which recorded 1,570 birds from 57 species, found that the number of birds in the most contaminated areas declined by 66% compared with sites that had normal background radiation levels. Moller and Mousseau are currently carrying out research to find out whether the decline was caused by radiation affecting the birds fertility after the

birds ate contaminated insects or whether it was due to fewer insects living in affected areas. "We are also looking for funding to expand the range of ecological studies to include invertebrates, as well as plants and animals."

Further information

Abstract of report in *Biology letters*
<http://tinyurl.com/2j455b>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/science/nature/6946210.stm>

More news in brief

Russian Forest Code

A new Russian Forest Code came into force on 1 January 2007. The Code apparently represents legislation which takes in to account the changes which Russia has undergone economically, socially and culturally in recent years.

This was not much of a New Year gift to forestry for many people, especially civil society, forest-dependent indigenous peoples and many of those who had worked for the Federal Forest Authority and were made redundant. Issues of concern include tenure rights for forests, limitation of people's access to forests, legal interpretation of the terms 'forest' and 'forest areas', the order of forest resource allocation and so on.

The new Forest Code decentralises forest management. The Federal Law 'On Implementation of the Forest

Code of the Russian Federation' set a deadline of 1 July 2007 for the regions to put in place appropriate regulation to enact the Code. This process has reportedly already been very chaotic because of the confusing nature of the Code itself.

On 11 July 2007 the Russian Federation Council approved amendments to the new Forest Code without consulting the regions. This move flies in the face of any notion of decentralising control and power over one of Russia's greatest resources.

Further information

www.wwf.ru/about/what_we_do/forests/codecs/eng/

TRN Briefing Note

www.taigarescue.org/_v3/files/pdf/201.pdf

Sakhalin shakes

On 26 July 2007 it was announced by the Russian state agency responsible for industrial safety and environment protection - Rostekhnadzor - that the construction of the Sakhalin II onshore pipelines would be suspended. This was because project operator, Sakhalin Energy Investment Company (SEIC), has apparently digressed from project decisions on the construction of drainage systems on active seismic faults and has used pipes which were not planned by the project.

In addition, the Natural Resources Committee of Sakhalin Regional Administration has recently issued warning letters detailing, "Sags in the pipeline, and changes in hydro-geological, frost penetration and ground stability conditions" and that "...protective engineering structures on the inspected sections of the route were absent".

Although there are numerous reasons for concern regarding the Sakhalin onshore oil pipelines the fact that the island is an area of frequent

seismic activity was highlighted recently for all concerned when over 600 families remained without shelter as a result of a major earthquake on Sakhalin. The earthquake, measuring 6.4 on the Richter scale, struck the city of Nevelsk on 2 August. Another earthquake measuring 6.1 struck the south of Sakhalin. A Il-76 plane delivered tents, furnaces and foodstuffs to 150 people in Nevelsk, which was the hardest hit by the quake.

Further information

www.sakhalin.environment.ru

Baikal tragedy

Opposition by environmental groups in the Baikal region to the construction of the International Centre for Uranium Enrichment at Angarsk has recently been the scene of tragedy and controversy.

In July 2007 a camp organised by Autonomous Action to protest against the facility was attacked by what is thought to have been a group of neo-Nazis. During the attack a member of the camp, Ilya Borodayenko, suffered a head injury and later died in hospital.

A week later, investigators arrested Pavel Rikhvanov for involvement in the attack. Pavel is the son of Marina Rikhvanova, co-chair of Baikal Environmental Wave, one of the organisations involved in campaigning against the uranium enrichment plant. The Rikhvanovs' flat was searched and Baikal Environmental Wave materials and a computer hard drive were seized.

Baikal Environmental Wave has recently issued a statement expressing its concern about the arrest and the fact that information was leaked to the media before those involved were informed. The organisation is worried that it may be the victim of a defamation operation aiming to damage its reputation and undermine its campaign.

Further information

www.baikalwave.eu.org/Eng/news.html

www.bellona.org/articles/angarsk_attack

Correction

Stephanie Ward has notified us of a couple of corrections to her article, 'Pearl of Siberia' in BREN Newsletter 5.

1. One of the characters' names in the legend of Angara was misspelt and should have read 'Irkut' rather than 'Irked'.
2. When Angara's father threw a boulder after her in a rage, we mistakenly understood that this was the 'Shaman Stone'. However, the sentence should have read: "She got away, but the rock remains in the Angara to this day and is visited by hundreds of people every year on their way to the southern shores of Baikal."

We apologise for any confusion this may have caused.

Threats to Karelian forest governance

Karelia stretches from the White Sea coast to the Gulf of Finland. It contains the two largest lakes in Europe, Lake Ladoga and Lake Onega. Most importantly it is on the Russian-Finnish border. Today old-growth forest occupies 7% of the land area of the Republic of Karelia.

Yet in only 2% of this area are these unique forests protected in existing conservation areas. Recently a Federal conservation area was established: the Kalevala National Park. However, over the past ten years the Karelian authorities have not established a single regional conservation area and they are not supporting processes for the protection of old-growth forest.

The lack of initiative by the authorities has led to partnerships developing elsewhere. Non-governmental organisations and forestry businesses have entered into dialogue with each other and are seeking to protect old-growth forest. As a result, nine companies, which lease around 50% of the forest stock of Karelia, have agreed not to fell old-growth forest in

s p e c i f i c

zones. These companies are Karellesprom, Segezhsy TsBK, Ladenso, SwedwoodKarelia, Pyaozersky LPKh, Lendersky LPKh, Vika and Ukhtuales.

The location of Karelia on the border between the Russian Federation and Finland is in some ways beneficial in aiding environmental protection processes. Thus there are international projects operating within the republic to promote the protection of biodiversity (for example, the Programme for the Development of Sustainable Forest Management and Conservation of Biodiversity in North-West Russia).

In addition, two companies (Swedwood-Karelia and Segezhsy TsBK) have already obtained FSC certification and two other companies are in the process of applying for it (Ladenso and Zapkarelles).

However, the fact that Karelia is a border region has led to extremely high levels of exports - around 50% (approx. 3 million cubic metres) of the timber produced in Karelia. The profitability of exporting timber is not conducive to the development of the timber processing industry in Karelia. The

major Karelian timber processing companies, such as Segezhsy TsBK and Kondopozhsky TsBK, have to source over half the timber they use from outside Karelia.

With the situation that has developed, taking into account the projected growth in customs duty (from 1 July 2007, 20%, but not less than €10 per 1m³; from 1 January 2009, 80%, but not less than €50 per 1m³), it is extremely important that the effectiveness of forest management in Karelia is improved.

However, the Karelian authorities are still failing to understand and/or investigate the most serious problems: the protection of old-growth forest and biodiversity during the timber harvesting process; the shortage of timber for the requirements of the Karelian timber processors; and the depletion of the forest stock.

Furthermore, the future will bring still more management challenges, including the devolution to the regions of control over forest management, the loss of jobs due to the transition to new technologies, the potential decline in exports, and changes to forestry regulations.



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