

## How to Turn a Reindeer Pasture into an Oil Well, and Vice Versa: Transfer of Land, Compensation and Reclamation in the Komi Republic

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Over the last fifteen years, many books, articles, reports and films have been devoted to the issue of conflicting forms of land-use in the Russian North, namely the extraction of mineral resources *versus* the economic activities of the indigenous inhabitants.<sup>1</sup> Far smaller is the number of publications dealing with the question of the transfer of land<sup>2</sup> which, from my point of view, is essential for a deeper understanding of such conflicts.

In this context, I seek to explain how it actually happens that an area allotted to reindeer-herding enterprises is turned into an area to be explored and exploited by the oil industry. I will look at the legal and other political aspects of this procedure, its actual implementation and the actors involved in it: the oil companies, the reindeer-herding enterprises and the authorities that are to negotiate the shift in land tenure.

I will show that the possibilities for the reindeer herders themselves to participate in this process are very restricted; and even in future this will not change significantly. Initiatives for attempting to secure their rights to land and resources will come from external (including international) actors, but hardly from the actual reindeer herders, although they are the persons most affected. For this very reason, I shall not present the process from their point of view, even if I personally see myself on their side.

### Reindeer Husbandry and the Oil Industry in the Bol'shezemel'skaia Tundra

To begin with, it should be mentioned that the region examined here, namely the Republic of Komi, bears some characteristics that differ from other regions in the Russian North. The Komi do not belong to the 'numerically small peoples' (*malochislennyye narody*) of Russia and do not have the specific legal status connected with them. Furthermore, reindeer herding is a rather marginal element of Komi livelihood. Only the northernmost sub-



When these 'commons' were split up by the Committee for Land Formation in the early 1930s,<sup>6</sup> the delineated corridors corresponded quite well to the long-standing migration routes of the various herders, but reduced their flexibility to change their routes in the event of epidemic diseases or pasture degradation. The delineation also involved biological investigations into the forage resources, and the herders were given maps (*proekt zemlepol'zovaniia*) showing their corridors, seasonal pastures and forage resources in all parcels of land.

As in many other regions of Russia, the distribution of ethnic groups in the north-east of European Russia does not coincide with the administrative boundaries of their 'ethnic homelands'. The eastern part of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug is inhabited by both Komi and Nenets in almost equal numbers. Russian settlers have lived along the Pechora for more than 500 years.<sup>7</sup> Coal-mining towns like Vorkuta and Inta were founded as forced-labour camps 70 years ago.<sup>8</sup> Thus, over almost three generations, the inhabitants of Vorkuta have developed a sense of local identity with a somewhat multi-ethnic, albeit Russian-dominated, ethnic background.

The town of Usinsk, however, does not yet blend so smoothly into its mainly Komi-inhabited hinterland. Usinsk is the hub of the oil industry in the north-east of European Russia. Oil exploration started in 1960, and until the mid-1990s, there was a steady influx of Russian, Ukrainian and Tatar individuals and young families, finding work in the oil business, affiliated industries and local services.

Oil exploration was going on in the whole of the Bol'shezemel'skaia tundra: the derricks of the petroleum-prospecting parties (*nefte-gazo-razvedochnye ekspeditsii*) are scattered over the entire area between Usinsk and Vorkuta. But prospecting work stopped in 1992–3 when these *ekspeditsii* ran into financial difficulties, and very few of the abandoned drilling sites are still guarded by their staff.

Oil exploitation, i. e. oil production, has been confined to the western part of the Bol'shezemel'skaia tundra. In general, the development of petroleum extraction follows a number of geological structures (belts) in a northward direction. Despite this north-bound tendency of oil production activities, there are still significant resources in the territory of the Republic of Komi that might be opened up in the near future.<sup>9</sup>

The first belt, which emerged over the period from 1960 to 1980, stretches from Usinsk to Khar'iaga and beyond (see map). As it is the oldest zone of production, this belt bears most visibly the marks of an 'oil landscape', such as derricks, 'nodding donkeys', pipelines and all the pertaining infrastructure. The pipeline that runs parallel to the river Kolva – the major artery of this industrial complex – has undergone considerable wear and tear, owing to its overground construction, the harsh climatic conditions and lack of maintenance. Pipeline leakages have been reported from several parts of Russia, above all from Western Siberia,<sup>10</sup> but the Usinsk oil spill in autumn 1994 became the best-known case, as environmental consciousness in Russia had been increasing over the preceding ten years, and journalists were on the spot. It is stated that approximately 110,000 tons of oil seeped out and into the tributaries of the Pechora River.<sup>11</sup> To be sure, the Usinsk-Khar'iaga pipeline had been leaking before and after the infamous 1994 event; the latter, however, has stirred up sensitivities among all inhabitants and land-users.

### A Closer Look at the Various Land-users

Emotions had been cooling down and the leaking pipeline by and large replaced, but the clean-up of the most heavily polluted areas was still under-way when I made my first visit to this region in October 1998 and decided to return and stay longer in the Usinsk district (*raion*) to pursue anthropological fieldwork over the next months. Being a research assistant involved in the TUNDRA project,<sup>12</sup> my task has been to investigate how local inhabitants, among them reindeer herders, perceive environmental change. At the same time, I am interested in the future prospects for reindeer husbandry in the Republic of Komi.

The former *sovkhos* 'Ust'-Usinski', based in Ust'-Usa, is one of the reindeer-herding enterprises most severely affected by the oil industry, but at the same time the one that has probably got the least benefits from it. The western neighbour, 'Severn', has succeeded better in making contact with the oil industry, although its central base, the village of Mutny Materik, is much more remote from the centre of the district. The migration corridors delineated for the reindeer-herding brigades of 'Ust'-Usinski' and 'Severn' cross the largest zone of oil production (see map). The herders frequently cross roads and pipelines with their herds, and are well aware of the associated difficulties and risks.

The oil industry in and around Usinsk is represented by a large number of enterprises. The above-mentioned petroleum-prospecting parties, or *eks-peditsii*, have left the scene or find themselves in a state of limbo, while the exploitation of the already known fields has become the dominating activity. The state-owned Komineft' held the monopoly of oil production until the early 1990s, when it set up a number of joint-ventures with Western companies.<sup>13</sup> In any case, it was Komineft' which bore the full brunt of the scandal ensuing from the 1994 oil spill: representatives of the joint-venture companies readily point out that the leaking pipeline was under the sole maintenance of Komineft'.

In late 1999, Komineft' was taken over by LUKoil, a company that had initially operated in Western Siberia, but has been developing into the most important player in the Russian oil business over the last ten years. LUKoil also holds shares in the joint-ventures and, in general, has gained towering economic importance and political influence in the whole north-eastern part of European Russia.<sup>14</sup>

### Transfer of Land, Compensation and Reclamation: the Legal Aspects

The process of turning a piece of land used for reindeer husbandry into one used for oil exploration and exploitation comprises three steps. The first one is called 'transfer of land for non-agricultural use' (*iz'iatie zemel'dlia nesel'skokhoziaistvennogo ispol'zovaniia*). Land tenure is granted to the oil companies for a number of years only, but can be extended several times. The transfer involves compensation (*kompensatsiia*) to be paid by the oil company. This compensation is considered in this article as the second step. The law requires that the parcels of land be eventually restored (*rekul'tivatsiia*) and returned to the agricultural users. Physical reclamation and legal restoration shall be seen as the third step.

The legal conditions for this entire process are laid out by Resolution N° 77 of the Council of Ministers (Government) of the Russian Federation, dated 28 January 1993.<sup>15</sup> This resolution has also been adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Komi.<sup>16</sup>

Reindeer husbandry is not explicitly mentioned in Resolution N° 77 (supposedly it comes under agriculture in general), nor are those individuals who actually work on the land, namely the reindeer herders, farmers and all

other agricultural workers. Before the law, their interests are represented by the collective or company they are working for. This may seem plausible, considering the absence of private land ownership. However, in a later section I shall argue that the reindeer-herding enterprise does not necessarily represent the interests of the reindeer herders.

### Transfer of Land

The company hoping to use a certain area submits an application to the district administration, which sends all the necessary materials to the agricultural enterprise in question, the village council, the local Committee for Land Formation (*komitet po zemel'noi reforme i zemleustroistvu*), the local Committee for Environmental Protection (*komitet po okhrane okruzhaiushchei prirodnoi sredy*) and the forestry authorities (*leskhoz*). The applicant must also submit documentation, stating the exact purpose of land use, detailed figures about all kinds of building projects, the planned period of use, and the plans for reclamation of the area after the end of that period. The agricultural enterprise and the village council have the right to refuse the application.

If all organisations involved give their agreement, the district administration approves the application and sends it to the respective organisations at the republican level. As the whole territory of the Usinsk District is classified as 'forest of 1st category' (*les I-oi kategorii*), the Federal Forestry Service (*federal'naia lesnaia sluzhba*) in Moscow has to give its approval, too.

The whole procedure takes not less than one year. For the time being, the applicant company obtains a preliminary document, giving it priority to this area over other applicants, but not yet permitting it to actually use the area (*predvaritel'ny akt vybora*). The final document is called *rasporiazhenie ob iziati zemel'*. Throughout the period stated in this document, the district administration maintains the right to check all conditions laid down in the *rasporiazhenie*, that is, whether the area is used for the proper purpose, whether reclamation is done in the proper way etc..<sup>17</sup>

### Reclamation

Plans for reclamation must be included in the initial project, otherwise it will not be accepted. After the period of tenure has ended, representatives of all the organisations mentioned above – but on the village and district level

only – have to decide whether or not the reclamation has been done in the appropriate way. The republican organisations are not involved in this.

As the oil companies have sufficient money for reclamation, the results of such operations are generally deemed satisfying by the Committee for Environmental Protection and the other institutions involved. The joint-venture company KomiArcticOil assert that they spend an annual sum of at least 100,000 US dollars for cleaning and reclamation and that they carry out large-scale, scientifically sound programmes for nature restoration (*prirodovosstanovlenie*). The exploitation wells belonging to KomiArcticOil are all in good order, but as of March 1999, a small percentage of the exploration wells that were taken over from the *ekspeditsii* had not yet been tidied, the reason for the delay being the remoteness of the wells.<sup>18</sup>

Circumstances are much worse in the central and eastern parts of the Bol'shezemel'skaia tundra, where the exploration wells should still be checked, maintained and cleaned by the *ekspeditsii*, but are often simply deserted. At those sites where reclamation has already taken place, it was often carried out quite hastily: the scrap, remaining chemicals and oil residues were dumped into a pit and covered with earth.<sup>19</sup> The fact that many of the sites are difficult to access is exacerbated by the dire financial situation of the *ekspeditsii*.<sup>20</sup>

## Compensation

Two different kinds of compensation must be paid. The first (subsumed under subsumed *asubytki*) is to cover the expenses of reconstructing buildings and other infrastructure in a different place as well as to redeem the 'forgone income' from production. However, the 'losses' (*poteri*) of agricultural production constitute the second element of the compensation. While the *ubytki* are to be paid to the agricultural enterprise, the *poteri* must be transferred to the local council, which may spend these monies in order to establish additional areas for agricultural use and to improve the quality of the existing ones.

The actual compensation payments depend on the duration of non-agricultural use and the quality of the pasture. Thus, KomiArcticOil pays a one-off sum of approximately 6,000 or 7,000 roubles for each hectare of land that the company acquires. Throughout the period of use, taxes must be paid annually. Furthermore, the company pays a one-off fee for using the woodland; this money is shared by the district administration and the

State Forest Reserve. What is called a one-off payment (*odnorazovaia oplata*) covers, in fact, only five years; in practice, the company pays the one-off fee in advance five times for an overall period of 25 years of land-use.<sup>21</sup>

The representatives of the oil companies affirm that they do pay all these fees, yet the reindeer herders complain that they do not see any of the compensation. It seems that the *ubytki* money is transferred not to the reindeer-herding enterprises directly, but to the district's account. It is used to cover the debts either of the district or those of the reindeer-herding enterprise, as both accounts are permanently in the red. The *poteri* money also ends up in the account of the district. In the context of reindeer husbandry, it could be spent on repairing corrals, building new fences or erecting trade and supply posts for the herders in remote parts of the tundra. But the indications of the interviewees suggest that the district authorities use them for other, more general, purposes. Osherenko's remarks on compensation payments in the north-west of Siberia lead to a similar result:

'As of April 1993, according to a law passed by the council of the Yamal-Nenets Okrug, 50 percent of the compensation for damage should be paid to the land user (the *sovkhoz*) and 50 percent to the *raion* government. In practice both the okrug and the *sovkhoz* spend the compensation money for the same purposes – to provide housing, supplies and other material support to the local (not just native) population' (Golovnev and Osherenko 1999, 124).

Hence, it becomes evident why the herders feel they do not get any 'direct' profit (even more so as the compensation must not be used for paying arrears of salaries to the herders).<sup>22</sup> The formal procedure does not ensure that the previous land-user is duly compensated by the new land-user. Moreover, there is no guarantee that the reclamation of oil wells is carried out in an appropriate way. And finally, the wording and figures of Resolution N° 77 implicitly refer to 'southern' kinds of agriculture, such as tillage and cattle-breeding, but are often not applicable to reindeer husbandry.

### Actors and Their Relations: the Political Aspects

In short, the three actors in the official procedure of transfer, compensation and reclamation are the oil company, the agricultural (reindeer-herding)



enterprise and the various levels of the administration. If we now look at the other political aspects of the procedure, more actors come into play and the interconnections become more intricate. Mutual agreements between land-users, high-ranking officers' chats in the *bania* (bath-house), environmentalists' campaigns and (possibly) protests of reindeer herders are not mentioned by the law, yet they can all be used as powerful tools when it comes to conflicts over land-use, as I shall show later.

Among these 'additional' actors is the regional organisation of environmentalists: the Committee for the Salvation of the Pechora (*Komitet spasenii Pechory*), which was founded in 1988.<sup>23</sup> Its members were among the first to inform international environmental groups about the major oil spill in 1994 and since then, they have been drawing the attention of the public to the disastrous consequences for the Pechora and the people in the villages along this river. Most members of the Committee have a local *intelligentsiia* background; many of them are teachers and at least one is head of a village council. This coincidence between the local elites and environmental activists may seem somewhat uncommon to Western environmentalists' groups, such as Greenpeace.

Greenpeace activists visited the oil spill sites near Usinsk in 1994–5 and in spring 2000. From my point of view, the reports released by them give a slightly exaggerated picture of the situation;<sup>24</sup> but anyway, the very presence of Greenpeace has certainly had some bearing on the policies of the oil companies operating in this region. Cases like the Brent Spar (Greenpeace vs. Shell) have shown that environmentalists' campaigns do cause multinationals to worry about their image.

The representative of KomiArcticOil confirmed in an interview with me that the company must not, and will not, disregard environmental concerns. In her words, her company has adopted a much stricter environmental policy than would be required by the law (see above). KomiArcticOil has successfully sought to create a positive public image in the district and beyond. This and other joint-venture companies have been presenting their willingness to assist the reindeer-herding enterprises and village councils, providing them with financial and technical support. They have helped to build a new slaughterhouse, a school and a church in the villages pertaining to 'Severn' and 'Ust'-Usinski'. When KomiArcticOil realised that the compensation money did not reach its final destination, the company tried to make an informal

arrangement with 'Severny' and in 1998, it was agreed that the oil company would pay 10,000 roubles to this *sovkhos* directly. The plan failed, however, as it was not possible to transfer the sum from one account to the other; instead, it was transferred to the district administration, as usual.

Meanwhile, the herders keep criticising that they do not benefit at all from their pastures being exploited by the oil companies, which gain millions of dollars. When I travelled with four members of a reindeer-herding brigade from Ust'-Usa to their tundra camp on a new private road built by an oil company, the driver of the car was annoyed by the fact that he had to obtain a special permit for this, saying: 'You see? Our land, and yet we have to ask for permission'.<sup>25</sup>

Nevertheless, the personal relations between the herdsmen and the oil workers are rather pragmatic. Serious conflicts like the recent ones in Western Siberia are unheard of in the Republic of Komi.<sup>26</sup> Yet these personal contacts at ground level hardly ever affect negotiations about where to graze the reindeer and where to build the oil wells. Indeed, the reindeer herders proper do not directly participate in the procedure of the transfer of land: all that they can do is to express their opinions to the managers of the enterprise. In the best case, the executives make sure to ask the herders about their views; in the worst case, the management may ignore them.

### Assessing the Actors' Political Power

The legal situation implies that the heads of reindeer-herding enterprises have considerable influence over the decisions on land transfer. Ultimately, the agricultural enterprises may exercise the power to veto the plans for industrial development. But when it comes to political influence, their standing is much weaker.

Agricultural enterprises used to be the major employers in the rural areas of the Soviet Union and the word of a *sovkhos* director had much more weight than the word of the local mayor (*predsedatel' sel'soveta*). But this authority has shrunk, as has the number of employees that work in the agricultural enterprises. In the era of market economy, collective farms and state farms in the north of Russia have fared particularly badly,<sup>27</sup> and 'Severny' and 'Ust'-Usinski' are no exceptions to this rule. Nowadays, the village council is no longer dependent on the agricultural enterprise: rather, the latter

is dependent on the goodwill of the administration of the district and the higher levels. Concerning all questions of land tenure, the reindeer-herding enterprises may seek political support from the Department of Agriculture in Usinsk and the Ministry of Agriculture in Syktyvkar, but the influence of these institutions is quite restricted as the agricultural sector has few proponents, in comparison with the energy sector.

The influence of the regional group of environmentalists has become stronger over the last ten years: their members have a prominent status in the village community and close personal ties with the decision-makers on the local and, perhaps, district level.

The visits of international environmental activists, I suppose, may inspire the representatives of the village elites to some degree, yet the higher echelons of the administration certainly dislike this kind of publicity, which reminds the Western public time and again of Russia's ecological problems.<sup>28</sup>

More palpable is the pressure that well-known environmental NGOs can exert on oil companies, as has been illustrated earlier in this paper. Western partners in joint-venture companies have imported a certain sense of ecological awareness into the region that previously had not been very popular among state-owned oil companies. It remains open to discussion, however, whether this new ecological awareness is based on genuine environmental concerns or merely on public-relations policies.

The influence of the oil companies on the various tiers of the administration can hardly be over-estimated. After all, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Komi and the district of Usinsk obtain exceedingly large revenues from the petroleum industry. Little wonder then if the decision about the transfer of land is taken in favour of the oil company.

However, the *sovkhos* 'Ust'-Usinski', supported by the village council of Ust'-Usa,<sup>29</sup> made use of their right to veto in 1995 or 1996, when one of the prospecting organisations planned to pursue a geological survey in the area of the two Andriushkina rivers (see map).<sup>30</sup> This area comprises the only winter pastures in the immediate neighbourhood of the village, the others having disappeared under the industrial and residential areas of the town of Usinsk and the oil fields located to the north-west of it. This stretch of pastures is cut off from the others by the road and pipelines of the Usinsk-Khar'iaga belt of production, but two or three out of seven brigades of 'Ust'-

Usinski' still migrate to the Andriushkina area, because they prefer to have their tents close to the village.

One day in the not too distant future, the local oil companies might hand in a new application, having come to the conclusion that it is essential to expand their activities into the Andriushkina area, and two or three herding brigades will hardly prevent them from doing so. They could easily argue that the livelihood of two or three dozen people must yield to the interests of millions of consumers. This argument may be countered in equally 'global' terms: environmental protection, sustainable development and indigenous rights (and the fact that they are interrelated). The challenge, then, is to translate these principles into legal and other political concepts within a given case. To be sure, by diminishing the negative impacts of their operations, the petroleum companies could contribute to a 'cleaner' environment. Nevertheless, the issue of conflicting interests of land-use remains. The topic of the present paper inevitably leads to the question whether there are ways to guarantee rights to land for reindeer husbandry in the long run.

### Securing Land-use for Reindeer Herders in the Long Term?

In the last section, I want to discuss how reindeer herders in other regions of Russia try to secure their rights to lands, or at least, have a say in the negotiations about land-use. Taking East Siberia as an example, Fondahl<sup>31</sup> examines three approaches:

1. 'national' village councils and districts (*natsional'nye sel'sovety i raiony*),
2. 'communities of numerically small peoples' (*obshchiny malochislennykh narodov*) and
3. 'territories of traditional land-use' (*territorii traditsionnogo prirodopol'zovaniia*).

The first approach is based on the concept of ethnic self-government and assumes that strengthening political power at the local level will help to raise the concerns and pursue the interests of the inhabitants, who, as a national minority, may not be appropriately represented on higher administrative levels. *Obshchiny* constitute a rather new type of collective or corporation: indigenous individuals can unite at their own discretion to pursue traditional land-use on territories which were already worked by their ancestors.

Each *obshchina* obtains usufruct rights over a delineated area and, by this, a limited guarantee to forestall other kinds of land use.

In my understanding, it is not feasible to apply the first or second approach to the Republic of Komi. The republic itself is the designated ethnic homeland of the Komi people (and very few would contest that the Komi-Izhemtsy are part and parcel of this nationality), so the very idea of national communities or districts is obsolete. The concept of *obshchiny* does not suit the Komi reindeer herders, either: as has been said above, the Komi are not included in the group of the 'numerically small peoples' and therefore they cannot found or join an *obshchina*.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, most Komi (including the Izhemtsy) would sternly reject being considered as members of a 'small' people.<sup>33</sup> Generally, in the Komi case it appears that land titles cannot be connected with nationality.

'Territories of traditional land-use'<sup>34</sup> – or 'territories of prioritised land-use' as they are called in some regions – may prove more useful in the Komi case. This legal approach puts the emphasis on what one does rather than who one is (by nationality): it provides for delineating areas where the local inhabitants can hunt, fish, graze reindeer etc., while the extraction of non-renewable resources is restricted or not permitted at all. This would imply some kind of co-management,<sup>35</sup> whereby the local inhabitants would participate in taking decisions and sharing responsibilities together with the representatives of the district's government. Zaporotski and Murashko describe how such a territory has been established in Kamchatka and also discuss the difficulties that the initiators came across; for example, the official document does not state the terms of the tenure or whether it is in perpetuity or not.<sup>36</sup>

To the best of my knowledge, in the Republic of Komi 'territories of traditional land-use' have not been considered as a legal or practical issue.<sup>37</sup> What seems conceivable in other regions of the Russian North is perhaps not a feasible approach in the Republic of Komi.

Are there other ways of strengthening the role of the reindeer herders or, at least, the role of their managers, in the legal procedure? Perhaps, if Resolution N° 77 could be revised. Still, the economic importance of the oil companies permits them to lobby successfully for their interests. In the Yamal-Nenets Okrug, for instance, the Russian gas monopolist *Gasprom* incorporated the *sovkhos* 'Baidaratskii' into one of its regional branches.

Other reindeer-herding enterprises, too, may be restructured as subsidiaries of oil and gas companies.<sup>38</sup> This could equally happen in the Komi Republic: the oil companies are already supporting the agricultural enterprises with sundry goods and services (see above) – in the long run, it could be much more convenient to integrate the herding business into the energy sector and to preclude any kind of opposition.

Is it likely that environmental policies will be enhanced both within and outside the administration? The government of the Republic of Komi often refers to what has been achieved so far in terms of protecting the unique natural habitat of the region. The largest national park within the whole of Europe is located in the eastern part of Komi.<sup>39</sup> In the Usinsk district, south of the river Usa, a large complex of boglands has been declared a nature reserve (*zakaznik*). However, in the reindeer-herding areas of the Usinsk district, which are nowadays all north of the Usa, the two existing nature reserves are very small.

One future option for maintaining biodiversity and, at the same time, accommodating the needs of 'traditional' land-users could be to establish a biosphere reserve<sup>40</sup> in the region around Usinsk. Such a biosphere reserve would include a core zone, functioning as a strict reserve, an intermediate zone for sustainable land-use and a regeneration zone around those areas that should undergo reclamation and nature restoration. One must not expect that this strategy offers ready-made solutions for all ecological and socio-economic concerns in this region, but it could foster a regional development more balanced than the existing one. Indeed, 'territories of traditional land-use' and/or biosphere reserves would perfectly fit into the rhetoric on 'sustainable land-use' and Russia's vows to implement it.<sup>41</sup> Yet the fact that in May 2000 the federal State Committee for Environmental Protection was incorporated into the Committee for Nature Resources Use<sup>42</sup> does not provide grounds for optimism: apparently, ecological concerns have lost much of their importance in the eyes of the government.

At the moment, there may be a greater likelihood that environmental considerations will gain increasing importance *outside* the administration.<sup>43</sup> Both rural and urban inhabitants of the Usinsk district do feel concerned about the ecological condition of this area, and environmental education at school has its share in this. Perhaps, even the oil companies themselves might become more responsible towards the human and natural environment<sup>44</sup>

provided that regional environmentalists and international NGOs not only continue their work but also establish a dialogue with the representatives of the energy sector.

This includes raising the awareness of consumers beyond Russia. It is no secret that Western countries have a vested interest in cheap oil and gas imported from Russia. Against this background, it is almost trivial to remind the citizens of the countries with the highest *per capita* consumption of oil and gas that Russia's environmental affairs also depend on them. Ultimately, a reindeer pasture turns into an oil well when the worldwide demand for oil increases.

## Notes

- 1 Publications include, among others: Aipin 1989; Vitebsky 1990; Ludviksen 1995; Dudeck 1996; Tuisku 1998; Okotetto and Forbes 1999. See also Wilson's contribution in this volume.
- 2 Osherenko 1995a; Osherenko 1995b: 1090–2; in almost the same wording: Golovnev and Osherenko 1999, 122–5; Novikova 2000, 154. Wilson (2000) and Murashko and Suliandziga (2000) deal mainly with off-shore oil production near Kamchatka.
- 3 Konakov and Kotov 1991; Konakov (ed.) 1994, 66–70.
- 4 The head of reindeer in the two administrative units amounts to 240,000 or 250,000 as of 1 January 2000 (according to Artem Rybkin, of the World Reindeer Herders' Association, personal communication, 14 September 2000).
- 5 Zemel'ny kodeks RSFSR 1994, 123; Interview with Vladimir E. Strel'tsov and Sergei V. Golyshev, Committee for Land Formation, Usinsk, 1 March 1999.
- 6 Berezovski 1930; Ivanov 1931; Habeck 1996.
- 7 Lashuk 1958, 64–94; Chuprov, Smetanin, and Popov 1991, 13–4; Shabaev and Peshkova 1997, 7.
- 8 Morozov 1997; Karjalainen and Järvikoski 2000, 59.
- 9 Lausala and Valkonen (eds.) 1999, figure 24.
- 10 For example, Novikova 1995, 38.
- 11 Poklad 1995, 27; Vil'chek and Tishkov 1997, 414; Lukin, Dauval'ter, and Novoselov 2000, 5; Lodewijx and Hirsch 2000, 12.
- 12 'Tundra Degradation in the Russian Arctic' (TUNDRA) is an EU-funded research project covering the catchment area of the river Usa. Both natural and social scientists examine environmental change and, in particular, climate change as well as the implications these types of change may have for future land-use. For a more detailed description of the TUNDRA project, see the web-page prepared by Kuhry and Holm 1999.

- 13 For example: KomiArcticOil, NobelOil and Northern Oil (*Severnaia nefi*). Compare Ebel 1994, 99; Lausala and Valkonen (eds.) 1999, figure 24.
- 14 Shabaev 2000.
- 15 Postanovlenie Soveta Ministrov – Pravitel'stva Rossiiskoi Federatsii 'Ob utverzhdenii Polozheniia o poriadke vozmeshcheniia ubytkov sobstvennikam zemli, zemlevladel'tsam, zemlepol'zovateliam, arendatoram i poter' sel'skokhoziaistvennogo proizvodstva' ot 28 ianvaria 1993 g. N° 77. In *Sobranie aktov...* 1993 (6), 588–604.
- 16 Postanovlenie Soveta Ministrov Respubliki Komi ot 23 marta 1993 g. N° 159. It was said that the wording of the two resolutions is the same, but I cannot confirm this as I have not had the opportunity to check the version of the Komi Republic.
- 17 Interview with Vladimir E. Strel'tsov and Sergei V. Golyshev, Committee for Land Formation, Usinsk, 1 March 1999.
- 18 Archegova *et alii* 1992, 92; Archegova *et alii* 2000, 82; Titarenko 2000, 87; interview with Tat'iana V. Titarenko, KomiArcticOil, Usinsk, 1 March 1999.
- 19 Interview with Aleksandr I. Kanev, mayor of Abez' (District of Inta), 2 September 1998.
- 20 Poklad 1995, 27.
- 21 Interview with Tat'iana V. Titarenko, KomiArcticOil, Usinsk, 1 March 1999.
- 22 Interview with Vladimir E. Strel'tsov and Sergei V. Golyshev, Committee for Land Formation, Usinsk, 1 March 1999.
- 23 During the first years of its existence, the members were committed to the protection of pristine areas in the east of the Komi Republic. With the government's decision to establish the national park 'Yugyd-Va' in 1994, the Committee for the Salvation of the Pechora had achieved a major success. (Interview with Nikolai I. Vokuev and Vladimir I. Punik, Committee for the Salvation of the Pechora, Inta, 2 December 1998.
- 24 Lodewijckx and Hirsch 2000.
- 25 Driver of the reindeer-herding enterprise 'Ust'-Usinski', near Voiuku-Vis, 17 April 1999.
- 26 The most recent report on the Forest Nenets poet Yurii Aivaseda (Vella) *versus* LUKoil is written by Moldanova [2000]. Compare also Novikova (2000).
- 27 Terent'ev (1998) describes the transformation of the agricultural sector in the Republic of Komi.
- 28 The authorities of the Komi Republic can claim with some legitimacy that vast expanses of its territory have remained unspoilt. Results of the TUNDRA project indicate that within the catchment area of the river Usa, areas of air pollution are restricted to Vorkuta, Inta and their surroundings. Water pollution is a problem in the rivers Usa, Kolva, Adz'va, Kozhym and Vorkuta, but most tributaries of the Usa are comparatively clean.



- 29 The village council of Ust'-Usa was entitled to carry out a referendum, as envisaged by section 28 of the Land Code. (Zemel'ny kodeks RSFSR', 1994, 124.)
- 30 Interview with Vasilii I. Khoziainov, representative of the reindeer-herding enterprise 'Ust'-Usinski', Ust'-Usa, 23 October 1998 and interview with Lidiia F. Khoziainova, mayor of Ust'-Usa, 6 November 1998.
- 31 Fondahl 1998, 86–8.
- 32 Zakon 'Ob obshchikh printsipakh organizatsii obshchin korennykh malochislennykh narodov Severa, Sibiri i Dal'nego Vostoka Rossiiskoi Federatsii' ot 20 iulia 2000 g., N° 104-F3. Rossiiskaia gazeta, 25 July 2000, 3.
- 33 Having said that, I have to mention that the Usinsk district, except the town of Usinsk itself, is defined as one of the 'regions inhabited by the numerically small peoples'. In fact, in the village of Kolva, there are about 40 Nenets inhabitants. But other areas (Izhma district and the village Yus'tydor near Inta) have the same status despite the absence of Nenets. I will try to explore the reasons for the special status of these areas during my next visit to the Komi Republic. – (Postanovlenie Pravitel'stva Rossiiskoi Federatsii 'O Perechne raionov prozhivaniia malochislennykh narodov Severa' ot 11 ianvaria 1993 g. N° 22. In *Status malochislennykh narodov...* 1994, 240–5).
- 34 Fondahl 1998, 121; Zaporotski and Murashko 2000.
- 35 Golovnev and Osherenko 1999, 149.
- 36 Zaporotski and Murashko 2000, 164.
- 37 With one exception: Aleksandr A. Maksimov, a Komi scientist, applies the term 'territories of traditional land-use' in a more general sense, identifying such territories as the regions inhabited by indigenous peoples (*korennye narody*). Thus linking ethnicity with economic activities, he subsequently makes a clear claim for '... property rights of the indigenous people to land and resources' (Maksimov [1998], 2). Such demands, however, are generally met with disapproval in Komi academic circles, and seen as too radical.
- 38 Dudeck 1996, 125; Golovnev and Osherenko 1999, 131–4.
- 39 The initiative for establishing the park was taken by a group of environmentalists, see footnote 23.
- 40 Kasten 1996, 12–3.
- 41 Ukaz Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii 'O gosudarstvennoi strategii Rossiiskoi Federatsii po okhrane okruzhaiushchei sredy i obespecheniiu ustoichivogo razvitiia' ot 4 fevralia 1994 g. N° 236. In *Sobranie aktov...* 1994 (6), 414–7.
- 42 See the webpage of the Forest Club of Russian non-governmental organisations (2000). Similarly, in the Komi Republic, environmental protection and resources management come under one ministry.
- 43 This assumption is corroborated by a recent court decision on prospecting activities in a nature reserve south-east of Izhma, parts of which are used as winter

pasture by Izhma reindeer herders. Local inhabitants and some organisations, among them the Committee for the Salvation of the Pechora, appealed to the Supreme Court of the Komi Republic, complaining about a decree issued by the head of the administration of the republic. This decree explicitly permitted a petroleum-prospecting company to continue and expand its ongoing work in the Sebys' nature reserve. In early 2001, the court declared this point in the decree null and void (Mezak 2001).

44 Tenbrock 2000.

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