

12 th NEAC
Keenote speech

Environmental Protection and International Cooperation in Russia

Mr.Sergey Tveritinov
Director, International Cooperation Department
Ministry of Natural Resources , Russian Federation

Mr.Chairman,
Ladies and gentlemen !

On behalf of the Ministry of the Natural Resources of Russian Federation I want to express out congratulations to the host country on the occasion of the opening of the 12th North East Asia Conference on Environmental Cooperation (NEAC) in Toyama, Japan. I also would like to thank the Ministry of Environmnet of Japan, Toyama prefecture and Toyama city as well as Northwest Pacific Regional Environmental Cooperation Center and the Overseas Environmental Cooperation Center for their contribution and work in organization of this Conference.

As it was pointed out before, the strong region cooperation give us not only an opportunity to exchange views and experience, but to resolve the global and regional environmental problems.

You remember the last Meeting of the North East Asia Conference on Environmental Cooperation. It was announced about arrangement of the Russian Federation to be a party of Convention on Desertification, and my colleague this morning informed you on this activity.

The morning symposium was really successful and showed us that only on the basis of the mutual cooperation it possible to solve transboundary ecological problems. And another important thing – it is so called “project approach”.

From this point of view and with your kind permission I shall briefly introduce the activity of the Russian Federation in environmental protection and nature conservation.

First of all, 65% of the territory of Russia in fact is not touched with the human activity, and this part of the territory is located predominantly in Asia. On the other hand, on the 15% of the territory the state of the environment does not meet the standards.

Russia plays a key role in maintaining the global environmental functions because the significant part of the biodiversity is represented on its territory with

various ecosystems, including 25% of the world forest resources that provide the sustainability of the global ecosystem.

The current environmental situation was discussed last week in Moscow in the course of the All-Russian Congress for Environmental Protection. The key issue of the Congress was a discussion of the Environmental Doctrine of the Russian Federation and elaboration on its base of the Action Plans of federal, regional and sectoral levels. It was also envisaged to elaborate and implement a set of the regulatory and support measures in the field of environmental protection and proper management of natural resources.

The main directions of the environmental policy are:

- sustainable use of natural resources
- reduction of environmental pollution
- protection and rehabilitation of natural ecosystems.

What are the ways and means of the implementation the national environmental policy?

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First. Further development of the state environmental and natural resources management;

Second. Regulative and legislative support and their enforcement;

Third. Economic and financial instruments;

Forth. Environmental monitoring and information;

Fifth. Scientific support. Environmental education and public awareness

Sixth. A civil society development;

Seventh. Regional environmental policy;

And the last, but from my point of view, not the least, - international cooperation.

In the framework of the international cooperation this year in Russia there have been held several important events which actually have contributed to the progress of the NEA cooperation.

1. World Conference on Climate Change. Round Table of Head of Delegations of Leading Countries. Moscow 29 Sept. -3 Oct.
2. International Conference in Khabarovsk "Environmental Protection in the NEA Region". The participants - Russia (Khabarovskiy krai, Chitinskaya oblast, Amurskaya oblast, Khabarovskiy krai, Evreiskaya oblast), China (Heiluntsyuan province), Mongolia (Central Aimak), Japan, Republic of Korea (Chunchonnam-do, Konkvondo provinces). The Conference addressed the most urgent problems of Amur River basin and response measures on its protection

needed on the part of NEA countries that was expressed in the Declaration approved by the participants.

3. 5th European Conference of Ministers “The Environment for Europe, 2003” in Kiev. May 22, 2003. National delegations of Western European and the Community of Independent States countries discussed and approved the Environmental Strategy of Countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. The output of the Regional environmental cooperation. Russian delegation rendered support to the European Union Water Initiative launched by the WSSD.
4. On March, 5-6 2003 Ministry of Natural Resources RF held the High-Level Meeting on Water Initiative for 12 countries. There was stressed the need in development of mechanisms of cooperation and coordination for promotion of this partnership.
5. The bilateral relations with NEA countries has been marked with events - the visit of the Minister of Environment of China Xie Zhenhua to Moscow . The results of that visit have been reflected in the documents signed jointly by the Russian Prime Minister M.Kasyanov and the Prime Minister of Chinese People’s Republic. The meetings of the joint commission on Environmental Protection (Russian-Japanese, Russian-Chinese) have been held this year in Moscow.

For the near future there are planned the following activities:

- 1) Next year – Russia will chair the Arctic Council for the period 2004-2006.
- 2) In 2005 UNESCAP will arrange the Regional Ministerial Meeting on Sustainable development. Its Secretariat has already started the compiling the Agenda
- 3) As you know, Mr.Chairman in this December 17-19th in Moscow Russia will host the Meeting of the Senior Officials of the NEA to discuss environmental issues. Through the diplomatic channels we have informed the UNESCAP Secretariat.

We think it will be a good opportunity to start our discussion about the joint contribution (possibly the joint document) to the Ministerial Meeting

Thank you for attention.