

KEY ISSUES IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IN 2004

The year 2004 in Russia was notable for the radical administrative reforming of the system of the executive bodies of the Federal government.

The general idea of this reforming was to share the competence in the following spheres: legislation and strategy development, direct implementation of the activities and supervision for the compliance of this activity with the adopted laws and norms. This process involved all the ministries and agencies. Accordingly in this year the system of the governance of the environmental protection natural resources management has been transformed.

Actually the 4 governmental executive bodies have a competence in this sphere:

- the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation,
- the Federal Supervisory Natural Resources Management Service (under the Ministry),
- the Federal Supervisory Ecological, Technological and Atomic Service (under the Federal Government of the Russian Federation, the Rostekhnadzor). (At present the issues on the antropogenic impact on the environment - pollution, emergencies - are transferred to the Rostekhnadzor).
- the Federal Service of Protection of Rights of the Consumers and Well-being of Population (under the Ministry of the National Health).

Some functions in the environmental sphere are also provided by:

- the Federal Agency for the Land Cadaster,
- the Federal Agency for the Water Resources,
- the Federal Agency for the Forestry,
- the Federal Service for the Hydrometeorology and Environmental Monitoring.

The final sharing of the competence, the establishment of the territorial bodies and adoption of the necessary regulations will proceed for about half a year.

Nevertheless the output of the new legislative acts and environmental norms has not been stopped.

On 16th November the Russian Federation has ratified the Kyoto Protocol. It is a strategic decision. This political decision will provide the opportunity to enter the international system of transfer of the advanced industrial and energy production technology.

The Kyoto Protocol – is aimed not only at the reduction of the GNG. It is an integrated indicator of the progress in the environmental management. If it facilitates the reduction of the energy output per unit of production in our country, reduction of the energy losses in the municipal sector, and a greater use of the alternative energy source it will contribute to the growth of the economy in general.

At these stage the major efforts are addressed to the establishment of the legislative base of the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol including the national system of the GNG emission trading. It will be based on the definite sharing of competence and functions between the executive governmental bodies responsible for the certain tasks.

The issues of the international market of the carbon credit, the property rights on reduction of GNG emissions will be referred to the competence of the Ministry of economic development RF.

The issues on the GNG inventory of the emissions and sinks, the compilation of the list of sources and the emissions cadaster will be referred to the competence of the Ministry of Natural Resources of RF with participation of the Roshydromet.

In compliance with the articles of the Kyoto Protocol (and Marakesh document) the Russia is obliged to implement the following

- establish the national system for the inventory of emissions and sinks.
- the submission annually the cadaster of the GNG emissions and sinks for the period 2008-2012
- the compilation of the National List of GNG sources and sinks for future «Joint Implementation» projects and emission trading
- the approval at the national level of the instructions and procedures on inventories of GNG emissions and estimations of their absorption by forests and biomass.

The year 2004 was notable for the progress in bilateral relations with the NEAC countries. In March we had NEASPEC Meeting in Moscow and the 3rd Meeting of the Russian-Korean Joint Environmental Commission.

We had two important meetings with the Chinese part – in Moscow and Beijing, where we had contacts also with other environmental and natural resources management agencies.

There was a very important initiative of the Chinese Part with the bilateral Memorandum of Understanding on Joint Monitoring of transboundary Water Objects. We have reached the agreement with the Chinese part to sign this Memorandum, to establish a special joint

Commission and Expert Group and develop a Plan of Actions that will be a base for the next joint initiatives.

We develop contacts with Japan on issues of the Kyoto Protocol and Mongolia on biodiversity protection.

The year 2005 will be important for Russia as it will become a leader of the Arctic Council and will finish the preparatory work for becoming a Leading Country in the Great 8 in 2006.

It is very encouraging that all the NEAC countries show interest to the most acute environmental issues in the region like the environmental threat to the Amur River.

I wish that our joint efforts will contribute to the integrative processes in the region as much as the economic activity does.