

Gross infractions of standards of hygiene can be seen at many stations. In Yuktal', for instance, domestic sewage is polluting the water conservation area from which drinking water is drawn. The sewage system for the so-called industrial zone is in critical condition, and waste water is regularly discharged into the environment. As a result, thermokarstal erosion of permafrost has taken place here which has led to subsidence of the permanent railroad way."

Question: "Scientists are being strongly criticized for all the evils caused by "The construction project of the century" - for everything which was not foreseen and not thought-out ahead of time. Is that justified?"

Answer: "Unfortunately, scientists have only had the right to advise all these years. Let me give you a personal example. In 1978 I was investigating the ecological situation in the railway's 'capital'. Excavators were digging gravel out of the bed of the Tynda river, which was a gross violation of nature conservation norms. The 'nickels and dimes' mentality can be felt everywhere along the railway construction project. The Tynda municipal dump was created in the floodland of a stream dangerously close to the river, as well as close to the city - which was supposed to help economize on fuel costs for dump trucks. That was the reasoning of the municipal services department. Truck-drivers also began to think this way, and so to save on fuel they did not even take their loads as far as the dump, but disposed of it in the taiga just outside the city. The heavy rain in June washed away everything except scrap-metal and construction debris. The northern rivers are cleaned out very slowly and the harmful influence of the Tynda dump