

The local forestry enterprises are very poorly equipped. In the four forestry enterprises of the middle Ob' region, where one fifth of the state forest lands in the Oblast are found and where most of the oil extraction operations are concentrated, the total value of the fixed capital amounts to just over one million roubles. As far as development is concerned, these enterprises belong to the "pre-oil development age".

To sum up, the balance of power in favour of the oil industry and to the detriment of a sensible, intelligent and scientifically-based utilization of natural resources, has become firmly entrenched.

The foresters are not alone in their concern: the hunting and fishing organizations are also up in arms. The inhabitants of the settlement of Ugut, for example, have been provided for by the rivers and taiga since time immemorial. The local waters were at one time the purest in the entire region. Today, however, the animals and birds are dying and the fish take has dropped off markedly. Four oil prospecting expeditions are just coming in and snatching up the land, cutting down the taiga, developing the quarries and filling up the rivers with dirt. "We are unable to seek redress for the illegal actions that have taken place," the Ugut townsmen wrote to us. "The expedition crew is not afraid of fines. They get the required funds from the state and just laugh at us."

About the question of fines.... Even though far from all the infractions are brought to light, each year the fines paid amount to huge sums, exceeding the cost of forestry operations. the oil sector is very free with its money, but this doesn't help the environment.

The Bureau of the Tyumen' Executive Committee of the CPSU last year, when discussing the work of the forestry administration and the "Tyumen'mezhkhozles"