

Concern Over Pollution Puts a Stop to Construction of  
Viscose Pulp Plant

A resolution was adopted at a meeting of the Bratsk Municipal Council of People's Deputies which will halt construction of a viscose pulp unit at the Bratsk Timber Industry Complex.

The mighty pine forest with its alder and birch underbrush held its ground for a long time against the encroaching construction sites. Hedged in by Bratsk's new micro-regions on one side and the large artificial body of water on the other, it retained the beauty it had possessed when it was still a small part of the endless Siberian taiga. It may be hard to believe, but only three or four years ago owls, wood-grouse, and flocks of hazel-hens could be seen within a few steps of the huge housing projects.

At that time, pines still rustled softly in the breeze, but even then it was clear they could not remain forever. The poisonous loop created by industrial pollution which has affected over 80,000 ha of pine forests surrounding the city has not bypassed this small area of vegetation. Two years ago, the mighty pines began to die at first, the bark peeled off their golden trunks, and then their needles fell. The only signs of life in the dead forest were the crows.

The damage to the environment around Bratsk and other industrial centres in the Angara River area has been so severe that it is impossible not to see its consequences. People are not only concerned about nature, but about their own health as well. Siberians want more than to take pride in their enormous factories and the fact that they have the world's largest reservoir: they want to breathe fresh air and feel confident about the future.

Congratulations are due to the deputies and ordinary citizens invited to the "ecological" meeting held by the Bratsk Municipal Council who raised a storm of protest when the executives of the aluminum plant and