

The experience of many generations of native inhabitants has formed what we today call an elevated ecological culture. This culture has almost to this day preserved the nesting grounds of waterfowl, the "commercial fishing waters", rich in valuable fish species, the thousands of deer, and the many fur-bearing animals and seals.

Yamalians are not the only ones to make use of the natural resources of the Arctic peninsula. The delicacies produced by three state farms and fish factories situated on its territory have traditionally been delivered to the European part of the country, as well as abroad. And in recent five-year periods it has been an important element in the provision of workers for the burgeoning oil-and-gas complex in the Tyumen North.

But now the leading detachments of the industrial complex have reached Yamal: three large oil-and-gas prospecting expeditions have settled on the peninsula and the first landing parties of construction workers have arrived.

"The problem is that we were technically unprepared to take on the Arctic", explains Yu. Loganov, head of "Glavtyumengeologiya". "Clearly, heavy tractors and cross-country vehicles, no matter how much one tries to prevent it, do harm to the tundra; we only have experimental models of the long-promised air cushion vehicles. Traditional construction and drilling methods have been mechanically transferred to Yamal without being adapted to local natural conditions."

However, geologists and builders have turned out to be not just technically, but, let us not mince words, morally unprepared for work in Yamal.