

and seeing on the spot how things are going there, I understood: the chief technologist had grounds for doubting the objectivity of the conclusion reached by the academic committee.

One doesn't have to be a specialist to understand and interpret the beneficial changes that have taken place at the pulp and paper mill, chief among which is the ecological awareness of the local papermakers. The enterprise is implementing the ecological program in good time. At what other mill in the republic is more than 25% of the fixed productive capital allocated to nature conservation? While not a penny was spent here on ecology in the tenth Five-Year Plan, 16.8 million roubles were spent in the eleventh and more than 23 million in the current Plan. New shops equipped with ecologically clean equipment and powerful purification plants have been constructed. In July of this year, the paper-making machines will be cleaned locally and removed for settling and recovery of fibre.

"They are portraying us in the republic as soulless monsters: they are saying that for the sake of profit we will ruin the resort seaside," says M. Peskun, the Chief Engineer of the pulp and paper mill. It is precisely for the sake of the ecology that we have incurred multi-million rouble losses - we have reduced the cooking of pulp, discontinued the production of alcohol, and held up the construction of a new yeast shop, into which heaps of money had already been poured. And this in the face of the fact that Latvia is only 70 per cent self-sufficient in its mixed fodder requirement. The criticism which has been directed against our enterprise is thus a two-edged sword: the collective has earned millions of roubles less, while the economy of the republic has suffered heavy losses.