

ENVIRONMENT

Finnish Firms to Assist in Reconstruction and Reprofiling of Baikalsk and Selenginsk Combines

A deterioration in the ecological situation on the shores of the famous Siberian sea is usually linked with the industrial activities of two combines: the Baikalsk and the Selenginsk. Public opinion is insisting that they be reprofiled. The Irkutians have been particularly active. Central television recently carried a programme dealing with a prosecution brought against the Baikalsk Pulp and Paper Combine. Is there a need for a similar type of court case here in Buryatia?

Here are the facts: during the past year the maximum concentration of methylmercaptan exceeded the maximum permissible norms 25-fold. In the case of dust and carbon disulphide it was 4-fold in excess, and of carbon monoxide, hydrogen sulphide and nitrogen peroxide, 3-fold. Air pollution was observed to be highest in winter.

Now let us make a comparison: whereas emissions of pollutants amounted to 29,400 tonnes at the Pulp and Paperboard Combine, at the Baikalsk Pulp and Paper Combine they totalled 19,500 tonnes. It turns out that the Selenginsk people have a greater impact on the environment than do the Baikalians.

On May 18, 1989 a meeting of the Collegium of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry was convened to discuss implementation of the decree issued by the CC CPSU and the USSR Council of Ministers, "Measures to Ensure the Protection and Rational Utilization of the Natural Resources of Lake Baikal during the Period 1987-1995". The discussion centered on the reconstruction and reprofiling