

reversing the current of the northern rivers. There is even more reason to listen to his opinions on the Yamal Peninsula. At one time he lived and worked in this area and fought against another sadly well-known 'global project' - construction of the Nizhne-Obstkaya Hydroelectric Station. Sergey Zalygin sent the following telegram to the recent All-Union Conference on "The Ecology of the Oil and Gas Complex" held in Nadym: "I share your concerns about the future of the Yamal. I believe that development of the peninsula's gas and oil fields is premature. We need to confront the problems of the Northern ethnic minorities. A comprehensive ecological study of the project is needed."

The text of the telegram was posted so that everyone could read it. Was Zalygin's urgent message heard? And in general, have the sweeping promises made by the Ministry for Construction for the Oil and Gas Industry - the organizer of this forum - been fulfilled? Let us try to answer these questions.

It was clear at the outset of the conference that many participants were ready for serious discussions. What have we left behind in the Ob River oil-fields and the Far Northern gas-fields? Almost immediately the discussion goes beyond departmental interest and touches on problems requiring serious scientific research. The statement by V. Zavizion, chief engineer for Arktneftegazstroi, sounds very strange in this context: "When we planned this conference, we did not intend to discuss the timing of the development of the Yamal Peninsula".

In other words, rather than frightening us with impending ecological disaster, just tell us how to handle the existing situation.