

ENVIRONMENT

Protection of Northern Inhabitants Discussed at Murmansk

Yesterday in Murmansk the regional trade union conference on social and economic problems of the North concluded its work.

The conference participants worked out a program of concrete actions to protect Northerners and to improve their material situation. For many years exploitation of natural resources in northern regions was carried out without regard for social and demographic conditions, had a deleterious effect on the ecology, and resulted in a dramatic worsening in living conditions of workers, especially native inhabitants. Numerous appeals from local authorities to the governments of the country and the republic requesting they adopt immediate measures to head off a crisis brought no success. It is precisely this fact that compelled the recently created Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia (FNPR) to come to the defense of the interests of workers of the Soviet North.

A series of documents adopted at the conference point to concrete ways out of the difficult situation.

To monitor implementation of the resolutions adopted by the regional conference, a commission is being formed composed of representatives of all trade union organizations in northern Russia. Conference participants addressed an appeal to the supreme soviets of the USSR and RSFSR to lend support for developing a system of guarantees for social protection of Northerners during the initial stages of the transition to a market economy.

Also participating in the work of the conference were V.K. Gusev, Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, leaders of the All-Union Central Trade Union Council, and representatives of central ministries and government departments.