

harmful effluent for a minimum of still five more years. The Selenga Combine is also not insured against possible accidental discharges. The approved engineering project to build a pipeline for discharging the effluent from the Baykal'sk Pulp and Paper Combine into the Irkut river would, according to scientists and the public, amount to a purposeless waste of tens of millions of roubles. It would have to be built in the difficult geological conditions of the Khamar-Daban range, and would only serve to further pollute nature.

And isn't it obvious that the Irkut river, which has remained unsullied up to now, and along which is located the most important recreational zone in the oblast centre comprising beaches, guest-houses and pioneer camps, will become polluted as well? We will no longer be able to collect drinking water from the river and the fish, especially the shoals of omul and whitefish which come up river from the Bratsk reservoir to spawn, will perish. Secondly, a large amount of timber will have to be felled in order to lay down the line. This timber is growing in the water-protective forest belt. The landscape in the most beautiful regions in Transbaykalia will be scarred and the structure of the soil will be destroyed in the nature reserves and protected zones.

The most important objection is that the pipeline will not provide a 100% guarantee that the harmful effluent will be neutralized. In the case of an accident, which, incidentally are very frequent at the Baykal'sk Pulp and Paper Combine, the effluent would flow directly into Lake Baykal.

The introduction of this pipeline might give rise to the illusion in management circles that the problem of protecting the lake from the pulp and