

with the task it has before it unless all the country's scientific community takes active part at a time when a systematic approach to conservation is needed.

And what makes me raise this question in such negative terms?

The Siberian Branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences has expanded considerably over recent years and continues to increase its volume of fundamental and applied research in ecology. The Branch's institutes are making a detailed study of the natural resources and eco-systems of Siberia and how they change under man's influence. In the area around the Noril'sk metallurgical complex, the Katun' Automobile, Tractor, Electrical Equipment and Carburator Factory (KATEHK), and other large-scale industrial centres, they are actively helping to set up a programme of conservation for the Lake Baikal basin. During the course of this work, we became firmly convinced that we and the Academy of Sciences as a whole could simply drown in the attempt to resolve the growing mass of acute problems facing us. In our view, one way to avoid this in the next few years is to direct part of the scientific community into building up a clearly-defined national system of conservation. This system is being worked on at the moment but, we think, not vigorously enough.

At the same time, problems which require immediate attention are continuing to mount up. And the most pressing of these is that of clarifying the actual situation. We shall not be able achieve any changes for the better in nature conservation until we have sufficiently comprehensive information about the chemical composition and volume of waste from every enterprise, until we can single out the most