

alarming, and the words come from the bottom of their hearts. The times have passed or are passing for the unconditional assault on nature and for the affirmation of the principle "risk it and forget it." One thing is a shame - many years have been wasted. The calculations of experts from the Forest Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences reveal that under the current state of affairs the Krasnoyarsk taiga will cease to exist by the end of this millenium.

But it seems public opinion has thus far not exerted substantial influence on those same power industry workers. They stubbornly cling to obviously obsolete concepts. One of the recent examples of this is the construction of the Boguchany hydroelectric power plant on the Angara River. Before flooding, they left approximately 2 million cubic metres of timber on roots. This timber will rot, poisoning the new reservoir and the once crystal-clear Angara River. V. Kuznetsov, head of the "Krasnoyarskenergo" directorate, with whom I had occasion to meet, urges "not to be overly zealous with environmental protection measures." Otherwise, he says, we risk disrupting the territory's hydraulic power supply. And they continue to plan more plants. Even though the Krasnoyarsk hydroelectric power plant functions maximally at half its capacity - 5 out of 12 turbine sets have been put into service. More, evidently, is not needed. Why then such persistence? Is it not because decisions are taken somehow or other on the basis of conclusions of departmental science, which defends the interests of its ministry? Is it not because no one is interested in public opinion?