

seals have almost disappeared; the red-breasted goose, which has been entered in the Red Book [a list of endangered plant and animal species - tr.], is on the edge of extinction. Water bodies have become substantially depleted. Tens of thousands of hectares of deer pasture lands have been destroyed. Today, the 150,000 head herd of domestic deer must feed off land which, according to the calculations of experts, can sustain only 100,000 head.

Judging from documents from the USSR State Planning Committee and the ministries involved in the development of Yamal, higher authorities would appear to have not remained indifferent to this problem. Although late in coming, many important steps, in our view, have been taken to minimize the negative impact on the ecology of the peninsula. Specialized environmental protection departments and construction and installation administrations are being formed in central directorates and trusts; they are charged with the responsibility of healing the wounds inflicted on the tundra and of recovering losses to agriculture. Many millions in capital investment are being planned for relief construction.

"We just do not know what in fact to build with these resources", says V. Nak, head of "Yamaltransstroi", which is directing the construction of a railway line to the Bovanenkovo gas-condensate field. "Our line passes through deer pasture lands. According to modest estimates, just two state farms will be inflicted with damages of approximately 50 million rubles. Furthermore, there are lakes and spawning rivers along the line. We have long been ready to set about the task of making up for these unavoidable losses. However, the line has already been under construction for over a year, the 70th kilometre has been reached, and we still have not received orders for relief projects.