

Meanwhile, if the funds for the contracted works are not allocated to our association in full, it will automatically fail to implement the "Improved Programme" and, in accordance with a decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic, will have to pay up to two million roubles annually in fines. This, in spite of the fact that the proportional share of the "Grigishkes" Production Association in the construction of the Vil'nyus purification plants amounted to 3,800,000 roubles. The funds earned by the collective will be (and already are being) squandered in the form of fines for purposes unknown.

It is strange that sanctions are being used against us for the harm that has been done to the environment, in place of the help that would enable us to implement the measures already planned for improving the ecological situation. For the environment will be no better off as a result of our fines.

Clearly, in the Republic today there is no shortage of urgent and important construction projects. Even so, when from every quarter you hear about the priority being given to ecological problems, it is difficult to come to terms with the situation that has developed.

We also need to consider the political side of the question. In our region, ecologically harmful industries are being intently studied by the community at large and by governmental agencies in the countries of the Baltic basin. Protests against pollution of the environment and the degradation of human habitat are becoming increasingly loud. Many people will be judging the integrity of our words and deeds, and the effectiveness of perestroika, by the status of nature preservation programmes.