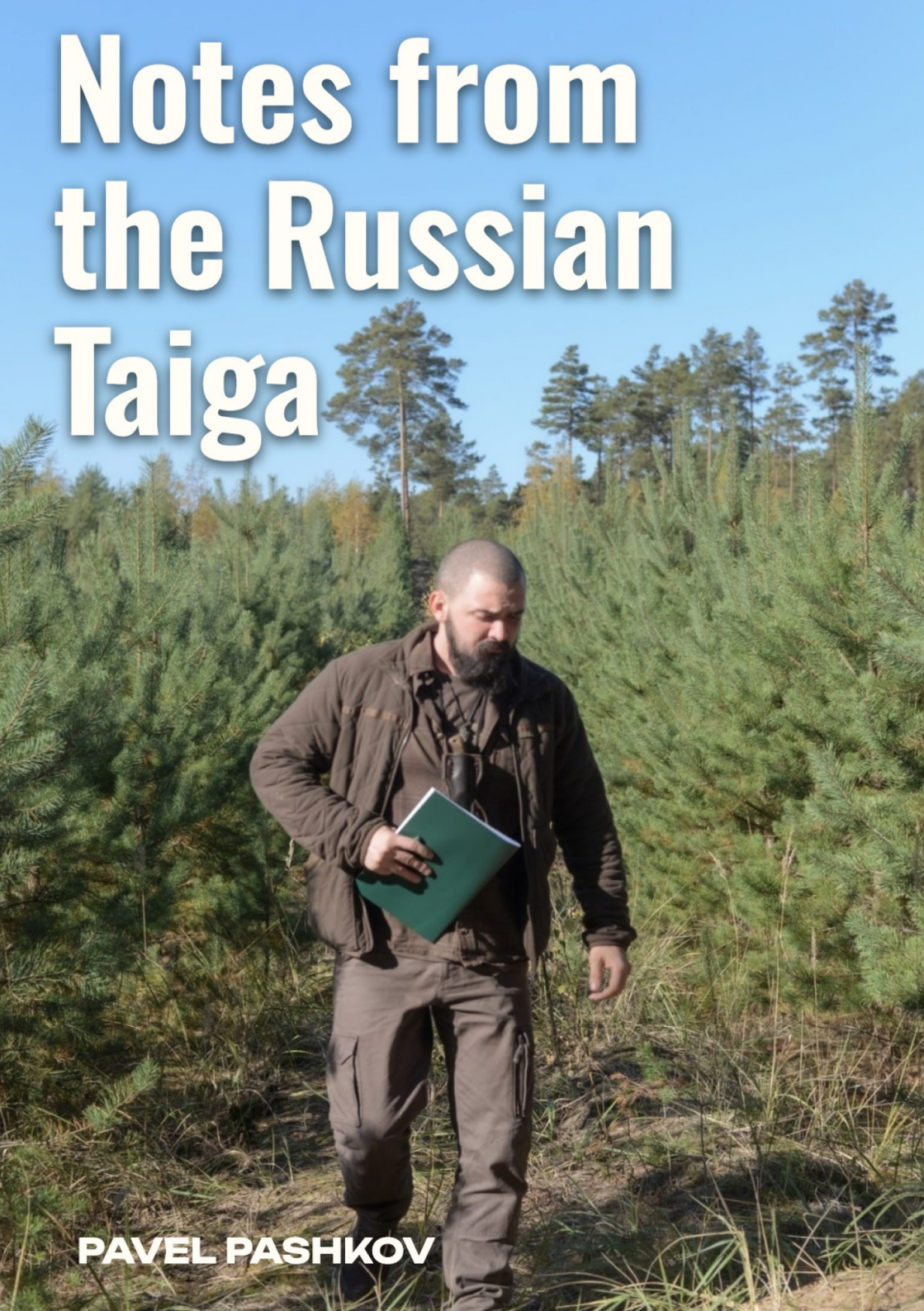
Notes from the Russian Taiga



PAVEL PASHKOV

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ThePashkov

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Introduction

The Russian Taiga will recover. Or perhaps it won't. It may disappear, becoming a relic of a bygone geological era, like the forests of giant ferns and the dinosaurs. On the timescale of life on our planet, that has happened before, more than once. 90% of all living things died, and life began to carve out new paths, seeking new avenues of evolution. And humanity? Well, millennia from now, some creature may unearth a preserved human skull at an archaeological dig.

He'll look into its empty eye sockets and say:

“Those ugly ancients were astonishingly stupid! It wasn't a meteorite or a natural disaster that wiped out the established biogeocenoses of those years, mowing down 90% of species! It was this bald ape that ate so much and defecated so abundantly that it drowned in its own excrement. A suicide that destroyed itself along with the world that spawned it, glory to its stupidity! This allowed the planet's biosphere to recreate itself anew, on a new path. One that led to the emergence of our intelligence. Let's put a human skull on the shelf to

remember: we must not act as stupidly as humans did!”

The Russian Taiga is for us, for people. The task of preserving the Russian Taiga is the task of preserving ourselves. Preserving people and human civilization. This is needed for us and for our own sake, not for some abstract ecology. Transitioning to an economy of human-managed biocenoses. Studying and exploiting self-sustaining biological systems. The gifts of the Russian Taiga are many, and we shouldn't refuse them!

The Russian Taiga is generous! We need to abandon the predatory economy of the conqueror, destroying everything in its path. Either we follow the path of creating and managing living systems, or we die. All of us. And there will be no descendants left. Only skulls on the shelves of entirely different beings! Who will already be telling their children: Never act like that ape that called itself human!

Chapter 1. Choosing freedom

People sometimes laugh at me. Instead of going to a club or a concert, since I can't sit still at home, I head to the taiga. In the cold, in the rain, to a place with no civilization and no comfort. Feeding birds or hanging birdhouses—well, that's just for school kids. Not serious.

I know what clubs and concerts are. I even occasionally visit exhibitions and museums that interest me. But I feel cramped there. Cities in general feel cramped, even though I love visiting new cities I haven't seen yet. Too many people. Too many rules and conventions, so much so that you don't even notice the people. And they're always coming up with new laws, rules, instructions... It's stifling!

The last time I was in the forest, I took off my shoes and walked barefoot for a long time. It had already started to freeze. The fallen leaves, once wet, had become crunchy. A rustle underfoot, but not like a pile of dry leaves. And the smell of frost. Did you know frost has a smell?! It has its own unique scent! And the air is clean and clear. Breathing feels completely different in the first frosts

that chase away the autumn dampness. Freedom! You feel the world around you with every cell. You soak up life.

Just yesterday, I was messaging with a mid-level administrator from the Ministry of Natural Resources. The man writes: "There's no one to work. The old folks are still around, but there's almost no young people. No one wants to live in the taiga. Everyone who can, at least moves to the district centers. Those who can, by any means, settle in the cities. I understand them. The salaries are peanuts, and there are no living conditions. On the contrary, I don't understand the young ones who don't leave. Why stay when you still have the strength to settle elsewhere?"

I ask, "And why do you think they stay?"

"They're probably scared," he replies, "The weak ones stay. How should I put it... not the smartest ones stay. Those who can't continue their studies and then stay in the city."

"And what," I write, "do you think it's natural selection of idiots?! Aren't there those who study and then return to the taiga? There are! I even know a few people who were born in the city and then moved to live in taiga villages."

"Well," he replies, "I've met such people too. Very few. I don't understand them at all. And they're interesting, smart people. They fully understand that taiga villages not only have no prospects, but never will. And you have to live there. Not just go on a camping trip once, but live there constantly. With an outhouse outside."

He really doesn't get it! It's a choice of freedom. It's the choice of free people, strong people. For whom it's easier to endure a cold toilet and lack of conveniences than restrictions and constant social pressure. There really aren't many such people. But they're not weak or stupid. They're strong people. With a great need for independence, inner freedom. People who haven't forgotten how to breathe freely, who haven't lost the living connection with the world around them "with every inch of their skin."

Chapter 2. The living organism of our society

I've written more than once about the living, intelligent forest, even about the intelligence of individual trees. Many consider this an exaggeration, a literary metaphor, but it's not! The statement, "intelligent forest," has a literal meaning. It's a fact. Fully justified and scientific.

Historically, this understanding isn't new. Our distant ancestors, before the superficial economic-capitalist relations, had a holistic view of the world around them. For them, family and kin were a whole organism, a living, thinking system. For them, the forest, the Russian taiga, were thinking, living entities. They built relationships with them just as they did with individual people. They were afraid to quarrel, to accidentally offend: such a strong, powerful partner. Better not to anger it! If it gets mad, you'll be in trouble.

Now we're taught from childhood: the forest, the trees—just firewood. A certain amount of firewood, expressed in volume, in cubic meters. And that's it. I'm not exaggerating! "Lumber," "commercial timber," "economic indicators"... It's all the same—just firewood. I've already given an example: this logic, this approach applied to humans—people are just labor force. Meat, essentially. An outdated, brutal, slave-owning approach. But it exists!

And such slavery exists in the minds of the rulers. And it systematically breaks out. How can we consider the Russian taiga alive if they don't always consider us, you and me, as individuals, as living people! The words "organism," "system," "intellect" appeared in scientific lexicon recently. Our ancestors expressed their thoughts differently, with different words. They said "spirit of the forest." "Spirit of the Kin." But the meaning is the same! Just the same, a living and thinking force. And now we're taught in history: barbarians, they say.

A primitive, outdated view of the world around us. Anthropomorphizing. But it's quite the opposite. They're lying to us. Lying from childhood. Lying consciously, fully understanding what they're doing. Those in power lie, for their own selfish, commercial interests. And a whole system of compulsory education is built. But it's a

system of organized lies, with confirmation by supposedly scientific facts of completely false, contradictory to these very facts, fundamental, basic principles.

I might surprise many. At first, it may seem strange. But think about it! After all, the genuine scientific approach to understanding the essence of the Russian taiga was never interrupted. Yes, indeed! This so-called "anthropomorphizing of the forest" was a real scientific, practical approach! There was nothing idealistic, primitively religious about it, as we're now led to believe! Pure practice! Ecology in action. Today you didn't just eat berries, you trampled them.

Tomorrow the spirit of the forest will take revenge on you. There won't be any berries, child. You'll wither away, and there will be nothing left for you to eat. That's it! This is how they explained it to the naive children, teaching them from a young age. This is our home, our forest. We live in it and by it. And this was the beginning of scientific biology, the science of living systems. The development of such scientific, well-founded views never stopped. It became more precise, more specific. But only a few knew and understood this. Many people distanced themselves, "squeezed out" from knowledge deliberately. Then they came up with mandatory

education for everyone. But in reality, it was a conveyor belt of lies in the interest of power. When scientific knowledge and facts are distorted to the complete opposite. How many years have Gumilev's theory of ethnogenesis, Vernadsky's theory of the biosphere, Darwin's theory of evolution been around? Do we not know about them? We do. Nothing is classified.

The basic, fundamental principles of human relationships are simple. What's good and what's bad. Ethics. How to behave decently and how not to. We don't think about it every minute. There's a simple stereotype of behavior, a habit. But it's justified, scientifically quite valid. They just replace concepts for us. They tell us: "What do you want, kid! Theory of evolution, natural selection—we, the authorities, are the strongest individuals in the human herd. We eat as much as we want. Alas, kid, it's just selection against you, you turned out to be the weakest. Die quietly."

This is a lie. A substitution of meaning. And Sir Charles never meant or wrote anything like that when developing the systematic theory of evolution. Yet in people's minds, these associations somehow work: "Well, yes. The fattest pig gets the best spot at the trough, survival of the fittest, right?" Nothing of the sort! If we talk about simple analogies, what we see

today is oncology. A cancerous tumor of society. A direct correspondence, based on precise scientific concepts. Cells—people are the same, but the behavioral program at the level of the organism—society is flawed. Uncontrolled division and unlimited consumption of all resources to the detriment of others.

Why am I writing about this? The Russian taiga isn't something isolated. It's truly a single, unified organism that includes us—people, families, our kin, and the entire nation. The fate of the Russian taiga depends on how the social organism functions. Right now, it's in bad shape. It has brain cancer. Maybe it will survive, pull through. Or maybe it will die... The forecasts aren't the most favorable. What do we see now? A serious disruption of the intellectual functions of power.

The taiga is air, regulation of the water cycle, purification, filtration of both water and air. It's the lungs, liver, and kidneys. And it's being handed over to other organisms, private companies, including those with foreign capital. These are already metastases on vital organs. Meanwhile, the nourishment of its own cells is limited ("there's no money, but hang in there"). Its own immune system and neural pathways (forest protection, forestry system) are disrupted.

Am I exaggerating?

Chapter 3. The living organism of the forest

Now, about the forest, our Russian Taiga. Let me say it again: THE LIVING ORGANISM OF THE FOREST IS NOT A METAPHOR! This has long been a scientifically proven fact—ANY INDIVIDUAL SECTION OF THE FOREST FUNCTIONS AS A WHOLE ORGANISM. To me, the term "intelligent" applies to the forest. No doubt, the concept of "intelligence" is relative. Mostly, it's relative to human intelligence and understanding, a concept that humans use.

How many years ago did European colonizers believe that Black people, Native Americans, and Indians had no intelligence, that they were "aborigines—natives" whose intellect could only rise to the level of a child? Let me tell you, this wasn't just in the written historical memory of humanity, no! This approach hasn't been completely eradicated even now! And, most sadly, it's often embraced by those in power...

Returning to our taiga. What is the concept of "intelligence" and "intelligent behavior"? Let's keep it simple, without dictionaries and reference books. Self-awareness. Here's "I," I have a Name. There's "I" and not-I, the surrounding world. "I" maintain a connection with the surroundings, choosing what's good for me and what's bad. I recognize or don't recognize other "I's." I acknowledge other "I's" as intelligent or not according to my criteria. With intelligent "I's," I maintain communication, negotiate, using language, writing, and so on.

All set? And here, a perfectly intelligent person, but with an arrogantly disdainful attitude towards others, falls into the trap of their own limitations. Everyone around is a barbarian, they don't understand my language, they speak some incomprehensible: "Bar-bar-bar..." No more than the growl of a beast. So, they're not people, not intelligent, and this justifies my ability to do whatever I want with them. Instead of trying to understand them. And, quite possibly, I just labeled an Indian as a half-animal barbarian who was offering to play a game of chess with me and discuss an interesting mathematical theorem... It's just that I, an English colonizer, have no need to learn his dialect... Something like that...

Now humanity, especially those in power, decision-makers, are repeating the same mistake. On a different, more global level. But it's the same mistake. We are dealing not with an intelligent organism limited by a visible body. We are dealing with an intelligent system that has no visually visible "body" to us. But it has qualities, properties, indicating intelligence. It's time to talk about the need to study the language of this system and establish communication with it. The "spirit of the forest" can speak to us, our distant ancestors knew this! And this is not "anthropomorphizing inanimate nature," as we're told now.

Let me present some facts. A sort of mini-scientific mosaic.

In 1966, Cleve Backster, a developer of lie detectors for the CIA, conducted an experiment: sensors were connected to one plant while another plant nearby was physically destroyed. The device showed a graph resembling fear on the chart of a higher mammal, that is, a human. Later, Backster wrote a book called "The Secret Life of Plants."

In 2012, Dr. Gagliano conducted research showing that sound waves emitted by plants convey information to other plants. (It's long been known that plants make

sounds. I'm not kidding! She just managed to show that the information has meaning!) This was at the University of Western Australia. By the way, Monica Gagliano also managed to demonstrate the presence of long-term memory in plants through her experiment.

I won't include everything to avoid overloading the article. Such research began en masse in the 1990s. Now, there are more and more of them. Technical tools and sensors have become so advanced that they can detect weak signals that previously went unnoticed. All these studies are very similar to the experiment with a frog's leg. We apply an electric current—there's a reaction, the leg contracts. Reaction, nerve conductivity, signaling system... It's as if we're dealing with part of some organism. And that's exactly the case. Even more interesting is mycology, the science of fungi.

In 2000, the Japanese biologist and physicist Toshiyuki Nakagaki experimentally demonstrated that mycelium can act selectively, remember, and learn. As early as the '90s, another mycologist, Paul Stamets, had described the formation of a distributed communication network comparable in its properties to our internet.

The relationship between mycorrhiza and forest trees has been known for a very long time. There are plenty of studies available; finding and reading them is not a problem. So, as of today, it is a scientific fact that any section of the forest is integrated into a system. Trees exchange information with each other using mycorrhiza, scents, and sound. The forest regulates the population of insects and animals within itself.

Compared to our human physiology, these processes are very slow. The system is a distributed network, not a centralized one. In the forest's organism, there is no "vertical power structure" from the brain to the organs, like we have. (By the way, our "power vertical" is duplicated by humoral and tissue regulation.) The forest's organism has equivalent "nerve nodes" connected by a network of communication channels.

Today, the question is about mastering the language of such a distributed network. And if we take another step forward in line with the logic of building a general biological system, we should include humans in it. Our distant ancestors, before the technological era, always included humans, themselves, in this system. With the advent of the "technogenic" way of thinking, humans were set against the forest in which they lived.

Humans were told: "It's just firewood, nothing more! Consume, burn, do whatever you want!" And this option exists in the theory of biological systems development. It's a cancerous tumor. It lives inside the organism, feeding on its resources. It's like the fable "The Pig and the Oak," in short. Although the true place of humans in the Russian Taiga (as well as in the Amazon Rainforest) is the brain.

NOW THERE IS A GLOBAL QUESTION OF SELF-DETERMINATION: ARE WE THE BRAIN OR A CANCEROUS TUMOR INSTEAD OF THE BRAIN?

So far, among the power structures on the planet (and this includes not only more than a hundred different countries but also no fewer transnational companies, "states without territories"), I don't see a single one behaving as anything other than a cancerous tumor.

Chapter 4. Expeditions to the Russian Taiga

The "Russian Taiga" project is my personal initiative to protect Russia's forests. Today, the issue of forest destruction is more pressing than ever, from the Finnish border to the remarkable Far East. Predatory attitudes toward forests have become the norm not only for regional authorities but also for local residents. Simply put, destroying forests is just a way to make big money.

Millions of hectares of pristine taiga, which have been home to our Ancestors since ancient times, are being sold to China for logging. Regional authorities see nothing in the forests but profit, and this reality leads to a sad fact: no one around genuinely cares about what's happening to the forests. Some will like a post, some will share it, but only a few will actually stand up and fight for the forests.

But this can't go on. Many people ask me what I stand to gain from protecting the taiga. I don't run ads, despite my public profile. I don't sell the manuals I write for the

Russian Taiga project. I have no plans to enter politics, and I don't want power. For me, the taiga is the temple of my Gods. Many people close to me know me for who I am. They know that I live by the ancient faith of our Ancestors, and that the forests are my temple. I have no personal interests in this, never have, and never will.

Throughout my work defending Russia's forests, I've faced massive attacks against the project, aggression from the authorities, and genuine hatred and envy from those who don't understand my struggle. Yet, despite this, as part of the Russian Taiga project, my fellow supporters and I have traveled all over Russia, realizing that nearly all the forests of Siberia and the Far East have been senselessly sold to China. We've come to understand that today, the temple of the Gods, our forests, are in global danger.

People start confusing my public activity with something official, political, or even with some kind of fund. But that's not the case! The "Russian Taiga" project is solely my work, the work of one person in the defense of forests. What one warrior can do to protect the temple of the Gods from destruction. The "Russian Taiga" project is an idea, and anyone who supports it can stand with me, any madman supporting my methods of fighting for Russia's forests.

We are not an organization or even an association. It's purely an ideological principle that states: each of us today must change our attitude toward forests. One fine day it will be too late. One fine day we will look back with regret at the world we destroyed. But even then, money will rule the world, only the right to speak will be taken away forever. And no one will hear us. Not even our Gods will hear us. The Gods of our Ancestors. For their temple will be destroyed.

So let's show everyone what it means to LOVE YOUR LAND! Let's ensure our children grow stronger over the years and develop a different understanding of the world. To take a step forward, sometimes you need to step back. There lies experience. There lies the great work of our Ancestors. And there... from the depths of centuries, the ancient Gods look upon us, whose temple we are destroying today. I don't know if I can finish what I've started. I don't know if I have the strength to stand against those trying to stop me on this path.

No matter how difficult my path may be, I will continue it. And I will be surrounded by the best people, true warriors, madmen. Over the past year, I traveled all over Russia, and over 50 million people on social media were able to learn through my project about what is happening to our forests. I managed to reach the

highest centralized authority in Moscow and talk about the problems there... but all this is not enough. This is just part of my battle! The prelude to a saga of combat that will one day become a legend on the lips of our children. We must protect the temple of the Gods, you and I! For thousands of years, our fathers and mothers have fed the forests. The time has come to repay our debt!

Chapter 5. What will happen if there are no forests left on Earth?

As of today, determining the actual amount of deforestation worldwide is extremely difficult because there are no organizations specifically tasked with accurately tracking the planet's forest resources. The only international organization under the UN, the FAO, relies solely on data from ministries that keep records within their own countries. In Russia, this is the Ministry of Natural Resources.

However, it should be noted that only a handful of countries have the ability to provide reliable data on deforestation and forest regeneration within their territories, which results in extremely unreliable information from the organization "FAO." It can be firmly stated that today the entire world is destroying forests at staggering rates, yet it is completely unaware of the consequences this will entail. There is not a single organization that clearly and transparently provides the public with statistics on the global forest situation. The UN-affiliated organization "FAO" relies on information

from the relevant ministries of all countries on Earth, yet these ministries themselves cannot provide accurate data, as the ministries of natural resources primarily conduct global business in favor of their states, and it is not profitable for them to engage in accounting for the planet's most crucial element, forests.

Many people today do not grasp the real problem of large-scale deforestation. Moreover, most people neither see nor want to see these problems, confidently trying to convince society that deforestation is a natural process and there's nothing wrong with it. Recently, Russia's Siberia and the Far East have been hit hard: foreign companies, mainly from China, have become the full-fledged owners of major logging enterprises, which has drastically affected Russia's forest reserves. The first to suffer were the commercial forests—those trees that are particularly valuable: ancient trees and precious wood species.

According to the public portal Wikipedia, the commercial forests of Siberia and the Far East will not recover, at least not in the foreseeable future. The unique ecosystem of many regions has been disrupted. After destroying valuable species of wood, logging companies began cutting down any forests that could be resold to wood processing enterprises. Primarily, these

are enterprises from the PRC, which supply the global market with wood products.

And so, the deforestation is visible from satellites, forests are being cut down in large volumes, and consequently, this has already dealt a serious blow to Russia's unique ecosystem. Many "smart critics" like to lament, saying, "there was more deforestation during Soviet times and nothing happened." It's important to note that such people are comparing two completely different worlds: the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation. In the USSR, forests were indeed cut down in huge volumes, but they were restored in even greater volumes.

Now, the main problem isn't that forests are being cut down, but that by handing over logging enterprises to foreign owners, any control over forest restoration has disappeared. Deforestation occurs, but no one is restoring the forests. In some regions, in particularly visible areas, they might restore a clearing or even a large section of forest just for show, but generally, the main deforestation happens far from populated areas, and there, no one controls the process of destruction and restoration of forests.

In the USSR, ranger work was developed, there were many foresters, and there was clear accounting of logging and restoration. Today, there is neither. Moreover, the profession of forester no longer exists, and ranger services are more focused on the business of selling hunting licenses than on monitoring and protecting nature. Based on the above, it can be concluded that comparing deforestation in the USSR and modern Russia is pointless, and the main problem is not the deforestation itself, but the lack of proper control over forest restoration after their destruction.

I want to touch on the only known statistics on logging and forest restoration in Russia. This is confirmed official information, but typically, official information differs from reality with much more dismal figures. Still, officially, from 2004 to 2011, Russia saw a reduction of forests by 41 million hectares. Only 16.2 million were restored. The net loss of forests was nearly 24 million hectares.

After the collapse of the USSR, logging relations between Russia and China became very close, leading to critical changes in the ecological situation in Siberia and the Far East (information confirmed by the portal WIKIPEDIA). The volumes of logging are uncontrolled and far exceed the permitted levels. There is no

reforestation. Sawmills and timber yards owned by Chinese businessmen play a key role in the spread of illegal logging. No matter how much the "critics" want to shout that this is nonsense, the information has been repeatedly confirmed not only by the public but also by international environmental organizations. A lot of information is revealed by the portal WIKIPEDIA, focusing exclusively on real indicators, materials, and data.

What will happen if forests disappear from our planet? I think this question concerns many, especially those who are particularly worried about forests. Deforestation on the planet primarily contributes to global warming. Scientists have said this many times! It is precisely the logging of forests that accelerates the warming process and brings catastrophic consequences closer. Our planet's atmosphere contains about 800 gigatons of carbon dioxide in the form of carbon, while terrestrial plants contain about 550 gigatons of carbon.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the destruction of forests contributes up to a third of anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere. Moreover, the destruction of forests on Earth will completely disrupt the water cycle in nature, disturb the hydrological regimes of rivers, and most

importantly, halt the process of transpiration of groundwater through plants, making the planet's climate dry. The Earth will become dry, the air will begin to heat up to maximum temperatures, and life on Earth will start to perish. Up to 80% of the biological diversity of forests will die first. Animals, insects, birds, and flora will perish.

Russia is the holder of the largest forest reserves in the world, but by handing over these reserves to China for extensive logging and relinquishing control over reforestation, we are killing not the planet first and foremost... no, not at all! Our planet has survived much more serious cataclysms. We are killing ourselves! And along with us, all earthly species of animals, the amazing flora and fauna. I hope society will come to its senses and stand united in defense of the forests. One day it will be too late.

Chapter 6. How does the Russian Taiga control the climate? And why do the authorities ignore it?

Authorities and businesses always take advantage of the lack of necessary knowledge about problems in society. By keeping people in the dark, they continue to destroy the wilderness.

Creators of rain and rivers.

On June 18, 2020, the journal "Science" published an article titled WEATHER MAKERS about the biotic pump theory by Russian scientists Anastasia Makarieva and Viktor Gorshkov from the Petersburg Institute of Nuclear Physics.

The article's subtitle reads: "*Forests supply the world with rain. A controversial Russian theory claims they also create wind*."

However, this "controversial Russian theory" is several decades old. It has been developed since the late '90s of the 20th century. Over the past two decades, it has

found a vast amount of confirmation in studies by scientists from various parts of the world.

Unfortunately, Viktor Gorshkov is no longer with us. His student and co-author of the research, Anastasia Makarieva, continues to advance the theory of the biotic pump.

Here's the big and crucial question: Why on earth is an important scientific theory still largely unknown, even though it has been and continues to be confirmed by HUNDREDS of serious quantitative studies conducted by biologists and climatologists worldwide?!

The main point is the fundamental nature of the biotic pump theory. Previously, it was believed that the circulation of air masses was entirely determined by physical principles. The biotic pump theory completely refutes this notion. No, that's not the case: the movement of moist air masses from the oceans into the continents is driven by organic life—vast expanses of ancient forests. Without forests, all atmospheric moisture falls as rain no more than 100-200 kilometers from the coasts. Beyond that—desert.

And so, this fundamental theory encounters resistance, as it requires a reevaluation of ALL PAST assumptions in a whole range of sciences. It's understandable why. If

the theory is accepted, then hundreds of scientific papers and prestigious professorial titles will be revealed for what they truly are—lies and eyewash for the sake of high social status and equally high academic incomes.

In general, fierce resistance to new scientific theories is nothing new in the history of science.

The theory of biotic regulation of climate also faces the difficulty that it contradicts the global climate agenda. Along with it, trillion-dollar profits, the monopolization of entire sectors of the economy, and claims to "power over the world"—all are revealed to many as obvious lies.

If the climate is regulated by Living Ancient forests, then these forests must be preserved. And restored in their entirety where they have already been destroyed. Instead of monopolizing global agriculture under the pretext of combating "cow flatulence," which supposedly poses a "threat to the planet's Biosphere." Alas, the cows aren't to blame—it's the deforestation of millions of hectares!

And the global racket in the form of a "carbon tax" comes into question.

And just imagine how upset the lumber industry and the owners of the pulp and paper sector will be—they can't even fathom it!

I've mentioned biotic regulation of climate on our planet Earth in my materials repeatedly. I'll try to delve into it in detail once more.

Based on the analysis of water vapor distribution in the atmosphere, Viktor Gorshkov and Anastasia Makarieva identified a principle by which air in the surface layer moves from areas of lower evaporation to areas of higher evaporation. Airflows are maintained by the difference in evaporation forces in these areas.

The force of evaporation is the reason for the horizontal movement of air masses. In simpler terms, winds.

From the analysis of evaporation force, scientists explained the stability of deserts, trade winds over the ocean, and summer and winter monsoons in areas devoid of forest cover.

By supporting powerful transpiration flows (water absorption by roots followed by evaporation through the canopy), natural forests draw in moist air from the ocean, significantly increasing precipitation levels. In the absence of such a biotic pump, precipitation in disrupted ecosystems decreases exponentially with

distance from the ocean over scales of several hundred kilometers. That is, purely based on physical principles, rain falls within a couple of hundred kilometers from the coasts. But over areas of natural forests, entire rivers of air flow from the oceans deep into continents at great heights. Then, thousands of kilometers away, these airborne rivers pour down as rain. And they give rise to such massive rivers as the Irtysh or Ob in our region or the Amazon in South America.

"Parades of rain." That's what these "flying rivers" are called. Dominant winds pick up the water vapor exhaled by forests and deliver rains to distant bodies of water. For THOUSANDS of kilometers!

In their models, scientists have convincingly demonstrated that Russia's boreal forests, for example, regulate the climate of ALL of Northern Asia! The theory, based on mathematical models, describes how the water vapor exhaled by trees sets winds in motion. These winds cross the continent, gathering moist air from its European part.

Then, through Siberia, they reach Mongolia and China. These winds bring rains that sustain the flow of ALL the giant rivers of Eastern Siberia. These moist winds irrigate the northern plains of China—one of the key

agricultural regions of the country.

It's a colossal, epic picture if you imagine it!

IF YOU CUT DOWN THE FORESTS, THE WIND WON'T BLOW FROM THE OCEAN.

THERE WILL BE NO RAIN OR RIVERS ON LAND.

NATURAL FORESTS DRAW ATMOSPHERIC MOISTURE FROM THE OCEAN DEEP INTO THE CONTINENTS, COMPENSATING FOR RIVER RUNOFF.

RIVERS ARE CREATED BY FORESTS!

The first part of this idea, forests as "creators of rain," has been considered by other scientists. Russian researchers have convincingly calculated this process. But the second part, the actual "theory of the biotic pump," has a much more global resonance. It continues the hypothesis of Earth's Biosphere self-regulation with convincing quantitative data. It extends the thoughts of Vladimir Vernadsky. Essentially, it confirms the INTELLIGENCE OF THE BIOSPHERE AS A WHOLE.

The idea of the biotic pump was first set out as a complete theory at the end of 2005. It is now 2022. 17 years have passed.

The theory, despite remaining outside the scientific mainstream, continued to expand and evolve.

Currently, the theory of the biotic pump demonstrates that a human-friendly environment is created and sustainably maintained in an optimal state by natural (undisturbed by humans) ecological communities of living organisms. Primarily—Ancient Forests.

But they have limits to their resilience!

Disrupted natural ecosystems essentially become anti-systems.

The exploitation of natural ecosystems through human economic activity destroys the mechanism of biotic regulation on a local scale, in specific areas. And it continuously weakens the global power of this self-regulation mechanism of the planet's Biosphere as a whole.

Disrupted ecosystems and artificial biosystems like fields, pastures, or planted forests are NOT CAPABLE of maintaining a stable environment. Not a single type of anthropogenic landscape supports the mechanism of the biotic pump IN PRINCIPLE! On the contrary, they act as powerful destabilizing factors for the environment.

In their conclusions, scientists have gone even further. They have shown that the level of order in living systems exceeds the levels of order in physical nature systems, which operate solely on physical principles, by twenty-four orders of magnitude. This leads to the understanding of Earth's Biosphere not just as a "self-organizing system," but as an "intelligent system"!

I can offer this image: little human-ants crawling into a computer's system unit. We build our anthill-humanhills there. We gnaw the insulation off the wires. Sometimes we "short-circuit" the contacts, causing partial malfunctions.

But the computer as a whole still, for better or worse, works.

Yet we have no idea about the existence of some hidden information processing processes. We keep gnawing away at the insulation, understanding nothing about the system, which is immeasurably larger and more complex than us.

And now there is a CONFIRMED theory of the existence of such a complex global system.

And for many years now, NO ONE WANTS TO HEAR ABOUT IT!

Some little human-ants are just "raking in the cash" from logging the Russian Taiga. Other little human-ants are "siphoning off budgets" of states and supranational structures, dreaming of "world domination." A third group is cutting down, and often mindlessly burning, the Amazon rainforest for pastures and soy plantations.

Chapter 7. On logging and reforestation in the USSR

Now that the issue of deforestation has finally caught the public's attention, people have split into two camps. But that's how it's always been!

On one hand (and fortunately, this is still the majority of people), there is an understanding that uncontrolled logging of healthy forests will lead to ecological disasters. On the other hand, there are those who love to loudly compare today's logging with the forestry operations in the USSR. I want to particularly address this issue today! The problem nowadays isn't that forests are being cut down. After all, we constantly use paper products, and wood is essential in everyday life.

The problem is that the forest reserves of Siberia and the Far East (primarily) are not being replenished. To those who like to compare the Russian Federation with the USSR, I want to point out that our Soviet ancestors had a conscience and restored forests—not just as much as they cut down, but much more. Especially for you, I

will publish below an article from the 1970s, when logging was very important for the Soviet Union. In the USSR, forestry was developed, ecologists were active, and there were many specialists in the field of forestry.

I remember someone among the readers even cited figures, claiming that more forests were cut down in the USSR than now. And the question arises naturally: who knows the current volume of logging? In the USSR, there was accounting; now there isn't. There's not a single organization that reliably reports accurate data on deforestation. We see the picture from satellites, we see aerial footage—and we rely on facts. And forest restoration in our time isn't happening; it doesn't exist and isn't planned.

Nowadays, forests might be "restored for show" in a park, near a highway, or by significant sites, but that great endeavor (I'm talking about forest restoration), which the Soviet people were truly renowned for, is undertaken by no one. No one is restoring forests where they were destroyed. In the USSR, forests covered 55% of Russia, and there were constant scientific and public meetings on logging and forest restoration.

And finally. You can't compare the present time with the USSR because back then, the logging belonged to us. Now, it's our Chinese neighbors who are logging on our land. If they didn't own the logging enterprises and instead bought timber from us, while our companies handled reforestation after logging—then we could measure up to the Soviet people! But now, any attempts to compare two completely different worlds are nothing more than a stubborn desire to "say something, anything."

Now, here's an example to illustrate my thoughts.

Article about logging in the USSR. Time: the 1970s.

According to scientifically justified standards, we can increase logging from 400 to 625 million cubic meters today without any harm to the fate of our forests. We haven't taken advantage of this opportunity yet because many green areas are located in remote regions without roads. However, extensive work on developing the resources of Siberia and the Far East continues. This has allowed us to reduce the volume of logging in the less forested areas of the European part of the country over the past ten years.

Now let's return to the excerpts you provided from the foreign press. I could add many statements from prominent foreign experts that I've heard during meetings with them here in Moscow and abroad. I think it's also relevant to mention the symposium held in Moscow at the request of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. Scientists from twenty-four countries participated, discussing the impact of forests on the environment.

Visitors noted that there was much to learn here from the Soviet Union. Just recently, while talking with Swedish specialists, I told them about the creation of our Central Institute of Genetics and Selection of Woody Plants. You should have seen the astonishment with which they received this news. The fact is, until now, such issues were only handled by individual laboratories. Of course, you've heard of "Bezostaya-1" by Academician P. P. Lukyanenko. Now, even in our forestry sector, extensive selection work is underway. A network of nurseries is being established to provide high-quality planting materials, and from the plantations in the next 15 to 20 years, we will obtain excellent seeds. I believe that in our industry, we will have our own Lukyanenkos, our own "Bezostayas-1."

And here's what's interesting: at the mentioned symposium, a representative from the USA spoke up and stated:

"*We must consider that private land ownership also hinders this issue (referring to nature conservation and land management). We must remember that this problem can only be successfully solved on a large scale.*"

Of course, it's very gratifying that progressive people around the world, concerned about the fate of the biosphere, quote Anton Pavlovich Chekhov, Soviet scientists, and writers. Tens of thousands of our foresters, rangers, workers, and employees who care daily about expanding green areas can, with even more justification than Chekhov's characters, speak about the trees planted by their hands. They can rightfully claim that improving the climate is not just "a little bit" but to a great extent within their power.

The forests of the future are reaching their peaks toward the sky right before our eyes. Who doesn't know how much suffering the forests of Belarus endured during the last war? They burned, battles were fought there... And now, about one hundred fifty kilometers from Minsk, on the road to Brest, if you climb onto a

bridge, you can see vast forest expanses on the fields of former battles, attracting attention with their symmetry and care. And all of them are the same age as Victory Day. They are barely 26 years old. In the post-war period, their area in Belarus alone has reached one million three hundred thousand hectares.

On the fate of clear-cut areas. Won't there be a gap between them and the restoration of the devastated riches? Well, that's a completely understandable concern. We, the workers of the State Committee, have often had to listen to similar questions. All our activities are precisely aimed at ensuring that forest areas not only do not decrease but are extensively increased. Words alone won't prove anything, you might argue. I completely agree, so here you go—meet the numbers!

During the eighth five-year plan, 10.2 million hectares were cut down, while 11.2 million hectares were restored. Not only were they restored, but forests were also created in areas where there had never been any before. The reconstruction of low-value plantations is gaining increasingly wider development. Every year, tens of thousands of hectares of low-productive aspen and alder groves are replaced with oak, pine, spruce, and larch cultures. In the new five-year plan, forest restoration will exceed deforestation by two million

hectares. I believe these figures can convince people who sometimes, often without any basis, like to lament that forests are being destroyed...

The significance of forests in our lives

The importance of our green friend is hard to overestimate. The multimillion print runs of our newspapers, magazines, and books — that's paper obtained from processed wood. No industry, construction, or agriculture can do without the help of the green friend. Not to mention medicine and workers' recreation. Take, for example, the health zones around cities. They have a special regime ensuring the most favorable sanitary and hygienic conditions. The master plan for Moscow's development plans to expand this zone to 275 thousand hectares. Around Leningrad, a green belt of more than 100 thousand hectares is being created. Similar zones will appear around many other cities.

In the fields, the forest protects the soil from erosion and the crops from droughts and dry winds. Science and practice convince us with concrete examples that on the lands of collective and state farms with protective forest strips, grain yields increase on average by 2 to 2.5 centners per hectare. The green friend is also the trees

in the semi-desert and steppe regions of the country, the protection of river sources, water regimes, and the safeguarding of mountains and roads. Everywhere we feel the presence of the green friend.

In conclusion, I’d like to talk about those who have dedicated their lives to the forest: the foresters, rangers, technicians, workers and employees, engineers, scientists, and their families. You don’t often see a person in a uniform cap with a golden oak branch on the band (that’s our emblem) on the streets, in a train, or on a plane. Both they and their families spend their entire lives in the forest. They’re not only involved in planting new trees, caring for the old ones, and protecting the green wealth from pests and poachers, but they also face even more challenging tasks.

This person heroically fights against natural disasters and fires. Forestry workers are equipped with the most advanced technology, aviation, and helicopters. When necessary, parachute teams come to their aid. But still, as a rule, the first to take the blows are the forester, the ranger, the technician, the workers, and the staff. It's no coincidence that Forest Worker’s Day has become a major national holiday for us, and I want to congratulate the army of people who have dedicated their lives to protecting nature and creating the forests of the future,

and wish them great success in their challenging work.”

Chapter 8. What can each of us do to save the forest?

First: it’s possible.

Second: today, it’s already clear what can be done.

THE MAIN THING!

It’s crucial to maintain a constant public interest in the preservation of the Russian Taiga.

The world has changed. The means of communication have evolved. It’s vital for everyone to be active, including on social media and messaging platforms.

The fact is, government agencies, legislators, and big businesses are increasingly monitoring social activities online.

The importance of centralized broadcasting is decreasing, while the significance of broad audience reach, often through spontaneous processes, is growing. Everyone can participate in shaping these processes.

Today, bloggers are equated with the media. And this trend will continue!

SHARE NEWS ABOUT THE STATE OF THE RUSSIAN TAIGA!

CREATE YOUR OWN CONTENT ON THE TOPIC!

STAY CONSISTENTLY INTERESTED IN THE ISSUE!

Understand this simple truth of the emerging information world:

WHERE ATTENTION IS FOCUSED, THAT'S WHERE CHANGES HAPPEN!

So far, large international environmental organizations have done significant work in protecting nature. They have pressured legislators to adopt environmental regulations. They still operate and matter today.

BUT!

Think about it! GIANTS, INCLUDING IN ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES, ARE THE DINOSAURS OF MODERN TIMES!

Just as the role of print media and books has diminished, so has their influence on governments. Only government bodies can globally regulate the rules of the game so that global business engages in forest restoration.

Because without external pressure, businesses won't restore disrupted ecosystems. We need to create public demand and, consequently, a system of governmental

enforcement to restore deforested areas.

Let’s take a quick look at the giants of logging. Not all of them, just a few "off the top of my head."

JSC "Arkhangelsk Pulp and Paper Mill." 100% owned by Pulp Mill Holding. (From Wikipedia.)

Pulp Mill Holding GmbH is an Austrian-German group (headquartered in Vienna, Austria) engaged in the production of paper, cardboard, and packaging with manufacturing facilities in Russia and Ukraine. (Directly from the company’s website.)

JSC "Ilim Group" is the largest Russian pulp and paper company.

The owner of "Ilim" is the Swiss company Ilim Holding, equally owned by American International Paper on one side and Russian shareholders on the other.

According to the charter, the location of JSC "Ilim Group" is Saint Petersburg, Russia. The company has branches:

Branch of JSC "Ilim Group" in the city of Koryazhma

Branch of JSC "Ilim Group" in the city of Bratsk

Branch of JSC "Ilim Group" in the city of Ust-Ilimsk

Branch of JSC "Ilim Group" in the Bratsk district of the Irkutsk region (Ozyorny settlement)

Branch of JSC "Ilim Group" in the Ust-Ilimsk district of the Irkutsk region (Nevon settlement)

Forestry branch of JSC "Ilim Group" in the city of Koryazhma

The company has representative offices:

Beijing representative office of JSC "Ilim Group" in China Representative office of JSC "Ilim Group" in the city of Arkhangelsk Representative office of JSC "Ilim Group" in the city of Moscow Representative office of JSC "Ilim Group" in the city of Irkutsk

Ilim's enterprises produce 75% of all Russian market pulp, 20% of cardboard, and 10% of all Russian paper.

Here's another example.

The logging holding company — ULK Group with a logging volume of 3 million m3 per year.

Almost all of the company's products are exported, 80% to China, and also to Europe.

Even a superficial glance reveals a lot.

Big business has no homeland — these are all SUPRANATIONAL STRUCTURES.

THE ONLY WAY TO PRESERVE THE RUSSIAN TAIGA IS TO LEGISLATIVELY FORCE LOGGERS TO FULLY RESTORE THE TERRITORIES.

AND THIS CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED THROUGH BROAD PUBLIC INTEREST IN PRESERVING RUSSIA'S FORESTS.

Some might think this isn't particularly important to them personally. That's not true.

Consider this example. A resident of the southern regions of central Russia may have never seen the Siberian or Northern taiga. But these are agricultural areas. Surely, even a city dweller has seen shelterbelts. They understand what that is. Without shelterbelts, the top fertile layer of soil quickly erodes. Erosion, gully formation. River flow is disrupted.

So, the RUSSIAN TAIGA IS THE GLOBAL SHELTERBELTS ON A PLANETARY SCALE.

Today, there is a clear scientific understanding that mass deforestation leads to:

— deterioration of air quality

— deterioration of river and freshwater flow

— deterioration of local climatic conditions

And these changes are accelerating. Everything is happening faster than predicted.

Chapter 9. What is industrial logging?

It's obvious when you've walked through hectares and hectares of clear-cuts yourself.

I'll try to explain it clearly for someone who hasn't seen the clear-cuts with their own eyes.

Imagine a gigantic tank battle. Like the "Kursk Salient." The only difference between heavy logging machinery and tanks is that there are no cannons, no sounds of shots or explosions. And the battle isn't tanks against tanks, but a war of man against the forest. The bodies of fallen forest giants crash down with a roar. Centuries-old spruces topple. Two-hundred-year-old pines fall to the ground as if chopped down... oh, right! They are CHOPPED DOWN. Below stands a little man, like an ant compared to the fallen body of a giant. He stands proudly. With a chainsaw in hand: look what I did! Today's quota is met, but there's still strength left, and time before sunset. I'll work some more: it's piecework pay, an extra cubic meter means an extra ruble!

This is how the economy of the modern world intersects with the ecology of the ancient taiga biome. I understand the importance of the country's economic development. I understand that the logger has a family, and he earns a living through hard (truly hard!) work. I'm getting more knowledgeable about forestry issues, and it's clear that forests fundamentally need renewal, and some wood can be extracted without harming the taiga as a whole.

But SEEING THIS 'LIVE,' I CRY.

Every time. And I'm not ashamed of my tears.

Every time, I imagine the economic efficiency of human activity: how many rolls of toilet paper could be made from the corpse of this taiga giant. How many times could a civilized person, excuse me, wipe themselves? You can calculate such a ratio, right? You can't just, like in the Madagascar cartoon, use a 'leaf'?

No need for a 'leaf.' In the modern world, there are all the technical means to solve the problem of forest destruction. Moreover, there's even a real opportunity to increase forest areas! Much of it is due to the inertia of existing social structures, business, and the state. And at the core of it all is the inertia of human thinking.

The problem isn't new.

I read a lot about the development of Siberia. It's not the first time I've encountered the indignation of authors—contemporaries of the 18th and 19th centuries—about the barbaric destruction of the taiga. Cedars are cut down just to get the cones. And much more like that.

About Soviet times, watch the 1980 film 'Citizen Leshka.' The same problems, essentially. Our country's forestry was established... and then collapsed several times. Before the revolution, there were excellent developments by Russian foresters and real achievements. Then the USSR, and a new collapse of what was created with the collapse of the country.

Now, thanks to our efforts and public attention, the state has finally turned its attention to the problems of the Russian taiga.

The Forest Code is being reformed.

Now, BY LAW, THERE IS A CLEAR OBLIGATION TO FULLY RESTORE THE FOREST AFTER LOGGING.

BUT! Here's what you should pay attention to:

First: '...reforestation OR (!) afforestation...'

Second: these activities will be carried out according to the INTERNAL INSTRUCTIONS of the forestry department, and the execution will be monitored by an official from the same government structure.

I've mentioned this repeatedly before. Using the example of the Arkhangelsk region. Reforestation there is currently almost complete. BUT 93% IS ASSISTANCE TO NATURAL REFORESTATION.

I won't delve into the details now. What and how will be planted (and will it be) on the clear-cut sites? Who and how will control it? The forest protection inspector? And what will they say when asked: why did aspen and birch grow on your site instead of the cut fir and larch? They'll say: 'Forester, let's make a deal, how much money to give?' Or simply: 'Forester, you know, this is a logging site, maybe a log might fall on a smart head?'

I'll paint a better picture of how this can be implemented in the modern world, using contemporary possibilities.

Moreover, it will cost less than the inert, morally outdated approach!

In the morning, a drone from the Taiga Forestry flies over the forest plots. The images are processed by a special program. A warning signal lights up on the forest

protection inspector's monitor: not everything is in order. The inspector (who, by the way, is a wheelchair user living a thousand kilometers away from the forestry) checks the recording personally. Yes, indeed, the work was done poorly. An email with a complaint is sent to the forest plot lessee, with a copy to the regional forest fund management. The plot is put under special control.

All the technical possibilities for such work exist.

And this is exactly how it will be implemented. It solves the problems of pressure on inspectors or bribery. It's cheaper: instead of ten or twenty forest rangers in UAZ vehicles, the same work is done by one person at a computer and one drone. Of course, there's also a programmer and an aviation technician, but they service the entire system with dozens of aircraft.

It's clear that all this requires a change in the entire social system. But this will happen; development is moving in this direction. And we are now at the beginning of this journey.

However, neither a multinational logging company nor government agencies will voluntarily do this. Even though both have the full capability to do so.

This is real, practical experience: changes occur ONLY UNDER PUBLIC PRESSURE.

And it's within our power to facilitate quicker changes by simply keeping attention on the state of the Russian Taiga. By not allowing the giants of the logging industry and the government bodies that oversee them to "fade into the shadows" and negotiate among themselves in the old-fashioned way.

Chapter 10. Scientists claimed that boreal forests have only increased: is this really true?

There are indeed scientific observations now, based on satellite maps, that confirm the shift of boreal forest growth into the Arctic zone. Such studies have become possible due to the availability of large volumes of data! Scientists decided to analyze the biome of northern forests from 1985 to 2020 to track the northward shift of forest cover. NASA specialists were also involved in this work.

The work was based on satellite observations, with scientists creating annual maps of tree cover, followed by a temporal breakdown over a 36-year period. The analysis showed that boreal forests increased in size (expanded) by 0.844 million km^2 and shifted northward by 0.29° of average latitude.

I actually wrote about this in my earlier works when discussing the "carbon agenda." The living organism of the forest protects itself and, in doing so, protects

us—all of humanity! Look, it's known that ancient forests absorb and store carbon, preventing it from being released. This is crucial for maintaining the life of the forest itself. And scientists in their earlier works, which officials later cited while promoting the "carbon agenda" (carbon emission taxes), talked about the thawing of permafrost and the release of carbon in the Arctic zone. They didn't consider the fact that if the permafrost melts, then the living organism of the forest moves into these territories, preventing carbon emissions. Essentially, the forest protects itself, maintaining the necessary state of the environment.

Scientists also mentioned this in the new work on the growth of boreal forests, demonstrating the ability of new forests to act as carbon sinks. Young boreal forests (up to 36 years old) already contain a huge amount of carbon and can continue to absorb it!

So, the scientific work itself is recent, published in 2026. It's titled "The Shift of the Boreal Forest Cover Northward Confirmed by Satellite Data."

Upon closer examination of the data provided by specialists, I see that all the growth occurred in areas near the tundra border. This is around 64° and 68° north latitude, meaning zones of cooling tundra where

young trees managed to take root. You could say the "fringe" of the taiga belt is shifting slightly northward.

This doesn't mean the revival of old forests, just the spread of young plantings into the tundra. Even the authors themselves emphasize that new growths, about 35 years old, are moving into new spaces, while century-old forest masses in the center of the taiga are rapidly being destroyed by humans. Simply put: while a formal increase in cover is recorded, at the same time, the native taiga is disappearing. And this new fact doesn't solve that problem at all.

Now further. According to scientific data, over the past 20 years, the world has lost about 80 million hectares of boreal forests due to wildfires alone. The size of the state of Texas in the USA accounts for about 70% of all tree cover losses from fire worldwide. Moreover, the situation becomes more critical year by year; for instance, annual forest losses from fires in Russia and Canada are estimated at 1-3 million hectares per year, with each major fire season capable of taking tens of millions of hectares. In 2021, for example, the spread of losses in the boreal zone increased by 29%.

Massive logging and land degradation also deal an additional blow to boreal forests. According to global experts, it was previously stated that only in Russia, about 20,000 km² of natural forests are logged annually (an area comparable to Israel). And the area of burning forests exceeds the logged area by about two to three times.

According to research by Global Forest Watch, under the initiative of the World Resources Institute, it's known that from 2001 to 2021, Russia alone lost about 53 million hectares of forest cover due to fires.

If you convert all this into surface numbers, it turns out that the claimed increase of about +0.844 million km² over 35 years roughly equals the losses of about 0.8 million km² over 20 years from fire alone, not counting massive logging and overall ecosystem degradation. Moreover, these increases mentioned in the new study do not affect valuable old-growth areas and wildlife refuges at all.

Additionally, the expansion of forests since 1985 has been announced, meaning it has been ongoing for a very long time. However, forest losses were assessed from 2001 to 2021. Thus, considering the initial rate of fires, over 35 years (1985-2020) — **approximately 1.4**

million km² of forests have been lost—almost twice the declared increase.

It's also very important to emphasize, from the same scientific study, that the data reflects the total area of trees, including all the smallest saplings. It turns out that there are actually very, very few fully developed forests!

I can say that the new scientific work mainly confirms the following: our northern forests, the mighty taiga, are a powerful organism capable of changing, adapting, and protecting not only itself but all of us. Humans. And that we, as people, completely fail to understand the deep processes of the living organism of the Forest, its interconnectedness, and its global role in sustaining life on Earth.

There is no "continuous growth" of forests—new trees mainly occupy former tundra lands, while old-growth areas of the taiga zone are being irretrievably destroyed. In other words, young forests growing in the tundra do not replace the millennia-old ecosystems of the Russian Taiga. The taiga can only be saved by acknowledging the real scale of its destruction and acting collectively, unitedly, for its protection, rather than being satisfied with the illusion of "growing forests."

Chapter 11. Russia to start growing GMO forests: what are the risks for wildlife?

In May 2025, just the other day, Russian President Vladimir Putin instructed the government to assess the possibility of developing genetically modified (GMO) trees with accelerated growth for the creation of forest plantations. In other words, to grow forests for future logging, but to do it as quickly as possible.

A direct quote from the official document:

> "The Government of the Russian Federation is to present proposals on the advisability of conducting scientific research and experimental design work, with the participation of interested organizations, to develop genetically modified tree species with specified morphological properties and growth rates for the purpose of assessing the possibility of creating forest plantations for commercial cultivation and use of such wood."

The deadline for this directive is July 1, 2025.

Let's immediately note two very important things.

1. Such a move by the state indicates that the real destruction of the true ancient forests is understood at the highest level! Everything we've been talking about for years—the destruction of the wild, the annihilation of the Russian Taiga—is true. And now, the President of Russia himself is initiating the development of programs for the artificial cultivation of forest plantations in an accelerated manner.

   The scale of wildlife destruction is devastating, global, but so tied to the existing consumer economy that no one can physically stop it! The urgent proposal to grow forests confirms the global crisis we're in.

2. We've been talking for a long time about the need to grow forests instead of destroying real ancient ecosystems! We were flat-out ignored. On the abandoned agricultural lands, of which we have millions of hectares, trees can and should be grown for industrial harvesting.

Unfortunately, right now, while the President is proposing to grow GMO trees in attempts to protect the remaining ancient forests, our officials from the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ministry of Economic Development are legalizing the destruction of real MOUNTAIN FORESTS, which are "hotspots" of biodiversity. It is URGENT to stop this madness immediately, before they make an irreversible mistake.

I know that my materials are read by specialized experts and respected government representatives who have significant resources to counter such initiatives! Stand against them, support us; we cannot allow the mountain refuges to be destroyed. There will be no turning back! Don’t let them tear apart Russia’s protected heritage.

Let's discuss the Russian President's initiative to grow GMO forests.

Growing forests is the right direction, even necessary! We all understand perfectly well that the economy needs wood, but further destruction of ancient forests is simply impossible. The line of reason was crossed long ago.

The fact that the President's directive is limited to July 1, 2025, indicates a deep understanding of the problem within the country's leadership. They clearly understand that action is needed urgently!

The situation we’re facing is dire: the current officials on the ground are INCAPABLE of organizing environmental protection measures, let alone skillfully transitioning the economy to forest cultivation instead of destruction. They'll start executing the orders chaotically, sloppily, with budget money being pocketed! Just like they already do with reforestation, where, according to the Russian Federation's Accounts Chamber, up to 90% of all seedlings die after planting. No one is held accountable, and there is absolutely no control (specifically, strict control).

Thus, we will undoubtedly get defective work from the authorities, but very active, as they will be mercilessly pocketing money. And afterward—drawing up beautiful reports on how the economy is transitioning to ecological forest cultivation!

What needs to be done before transitioning to forest cultivation?

- Completely change the leadership of the Ministry of Natural Resources and its subordinate structures! They have already failed previous state directions, national projects, and nothing will change until competent people take leadership positions.

-
- Our Audit Chamber works excellently—great leadership. The Investigative Committee of Russia also works well, but they need more authority! I would recommend forming an interdepartmental body of the Audit Chamber and the Investigative Committee with special federal powers to control the execution of the President's directive and the ability to directly hold high-ranking officials accountable for failures and misappropriations.

Only after this should we proceed with implementing the President's decree on forest cultivation. Otherwise, the endeavor is doomed to colossal problems.

Now regarding the GMO forests themselves

It's a good thing the President has tasked research groups with evaluating the project before putting it into practice. The fact is, GMO monoculture plantations can be extremely dangerous, and any careless action will lead to disaster!

GMO trees, due to their rapid growth, require enormous amounts of water and nutrients, which threatens to deplete soil and water resources at an accelerated rate. And we're already on the brink as it is.

Industrial planting of GMO trees poses risks of exacerbating ecosystem degradation and wiping out the last patches of wild nature. Laboratory studies show that GMO fields planted in lead-contaminated soil accumulated more metals and altered the soil microbiota composition more than conventional varieties. This indicates that genetic modifications can unpredictably affect the habitat, impacting all local ecosystems!

Another problem is the shoddy work of local officials. They will start planting GMO plantations right next to natural ecosystems, and the pollen and seeds of these trees will travel dozens of kilometers. As a result, foreign genes could enter wild populations of forest trees and cause UNPREDICTABLE HYBRIDIZATION.

Even if an isolated plantation is created, the long life cycle of trees (decades or even centuries) and the abundance of pollen create a risk of crossbreeding with natural forests and spreading material over large areas.

What happens next? An invasive GMO species enters the wild and begins a brutal expansion, literally destroying the habitat of the last ancient forests. Numerous scientific studies show that such plantations displace native species, not only of trees but also of plants and

animals.

I studied research from scientists in Brazil, where GMO forests were cultivated. They're already being called "green deserts"—almost no flora or fauna survives there; essentially, they're dead plantations of GMO trees that drain all the water and micronutrients from the soil. The soil is literally dead afterward!

Now imagine if GMO trees with even more aggressive growth are created and then spread across ecosystems. It would be good if they were at least isolated, but even then, gradual expansion would be inevitable! But no, I know exactly how local officials will act: they'll start growing these forests RIGHT NEXT TO WILD NATURE.

After the forests are grown and then cut down on large-scale plantations, we'll be left with dry, dead land without grass cover or leaf litter: soil erosion, desertification, salinization, and oxidation.

Where GMO eucalyptus has been planted around the world, the soil is already oxidized, degradation is everywhere, and the last nutrients are being depleted.

The race for GMO forests has already begun globally. Such large-scale projects are underway in the USA and Brazil, and plantations are rapidly expanding! Serious consequences are already emerging, and almost no one

can assess the long-term effects.

Water is disappearing, soil degradation is advancing, plant and animal species are being displaced, and true ancient forests are being invaded by tree species that destroy all local ecosystems.

Therefore:

- Such forests MUST NOT be planted on clear-cut areas or wastelands; this can only be done, and very carefully (which we certainly don't know how to do), on agricultural lands.
- A STRICT BAN must be imposed at the federal level on placing such forests near nature reserves and undisturbed forests. The distance must be sufficient, including enough room to account for the possible spread of seeds and pollen!
- Every placement of such GMO forests must undergo rigorous environmental assessments under strict control.

Growing forests is the right step. But I believe that the very idea of creating GMO trees and large-scale plantations of such forests is a very dangerous initiative that will inevitably get out of control! No one, not a single person, not a single researcher, can vouch for the

safety of the last patches of true wild nature. And once the situation gets out of control somewhere, our country won't just face something like the hogweed they're trying to combat now! No. It will face the spread of huge, fast-growing trees with uncontrollable expansion, leading to the complete and rapid destruction of wild nature.

I really hope that our Russian scientists can now prepare a competent report for the President warning against such an initiative and propose an alternative: cultivating natural fast-growing tree species! Moreover, in each region, these should be species that grow there and are native. Without invasions.

But even in that case, a colossal amount of work will be needed with observations and assessments of the water table conditions and soil quality. Any deviations could be disastrous!

Chapter 12. Building roads in reserves will lead to forest fires, logging, and ecosystem degradation

Our country's reserve system, like reserves worldwide, must remain intact. Untouched! No “economic justification” is appropriate when it comes to preserving the planet's natural heritage, which is crucial not only for wildlife but for humanity itself.

Simple things: OUR OWN HABITAT is being destroyed.

Unfortunately, officials neither understand this nor want to. Scientific assessments are ignored! It has reached the point where, for short-term profit, they are ready to cut down the ancient forests of Baikal, conduct clear-cutting in all the country's mountain ecosystems, and lay roads in the heart of protected lands.

In fact, this last point is what I want to discuss with my readers today. We are constantly told about the need to build roads in reserves. And they assure us there's nothing to fear, saying, “we'll carefully lay a road

through the ancient forest” without causing harm. But when we ask, “why do you need roads in the wilderness at all?” they reply, “To extinguish forest fires! To save wildlife.”

Let's examine this issue now.

First.

There is no real talk of forest fires. The only interest for officials is legalizing road construction to sell territories to big business for further development. Where there are roads, there is timber removal, industrial resource extraction, tourism cluster construction, and so on.

And second.

All modern scientific research, unfortunately, shows through tragic experience and practice that road construction leads to a sharp increase in logging, fires, and ecosystem degradation. ROADS ARE THE MAIN FACTOR IN ENVIRONMENTAL CATASTROPHES. Therefore, any references by officials to *“we're building them to extinguish forest fires”* have no basis whatsoever. Just words.

Let me try to explain.

First of all, a road “cuts” through the forest space, creating a long strip of clearing and breaking the continuity of forest masses. For example, authorities now want to build a road right through the national park “Losiny Ostrov”: imagine the reserve being split in half, with a constant flow of heavy machinery and vehicles at its center. Constant pollution, both noise and light, as well as heavy substances. This always causes changes in the microclimate, disrupts air and soil moisture, and increases wind load. The penetration of anthropogenic pollutants—sound, light, chemicals, heavy particles—begins to cause rapid ecosystem degradation.

It's also essential to understand that any ecosystem is a closed, self-sustaining organism! When an ecosystem is fragmented and roads are laid, all biological rhythms (the immune system of nature) are instantly disrupted, and invasive organisms are introduced into the habitat.

Can anyone stop the degradation from spreading further? Naturally, no.

Now further.

When major highways are built, so-called "secondary" roads always follow, including various clearings, paths, and so on. Such scientific data have just appeared, for example, in the scientific study "The Rapid Growth of Secondary Road Networks is Linked to Widespread Deforestation of Tropical Forests" from 2025. Scientists say that secondary roads branching off from main ones lead to much greater forest losses than the main roads themselves. For instance, in the Congo Basin, deforestation related to the construction of secondary roads was more than 31 times higher. In New Guinea, secondary roads led to an increase in deforestation by 22.2 times.

This is what global scientists are saying in recent scientific data! And scientists from all over the world worked on this: from Australia, Brazil, Germany, and Britain.

Will any officials study objective research and take it into account BEFORE starting the destruction of Russia's reserves? I doubt it.

Interestingly, in the Amazon, for every kilometer of primary road, about 49 km of secondary roads appeared, causing 305 times more deforestation than the main

road itself. Can you imagine the scale?

I use regions with the highest biodiversity and real tragedy as examples, where, just like what our officials are trying to do now, the reserve system was simply torn apart.

Look here.

The Congo Basin contains the second-largest tropical forest. From 2003 to 2018, the length of roads through reserves increased by 60%, and the rate of forest destruction rose by 400%. Moreover, the highest deforestation was observed within 1 km of the roads.

Let's turn to another scientific work, a study from the Institute of People and the Environment of the Amazon, titled *“Mapping Roads in the Brazilian Amazon Using Artificial Intelligence and Sentinel-2 Satellite.”* It was published back in 2022. According to scientists' estimates, 95% of deforested areas in the Amazon rainforest are within 5.5 km of roads.

Simply put, almost ALL DEFORESTATION occurs within the reach of roads. Additionally, road construction is accompanied by other “development” — infrastructure, tourism facilities, settlements, and industrial resource extraction.

I always tell my readers that it's important to evaluate any intervention in the wilderness HOLISTICALLY AND COMPREHENSIVELY. Any road carries a multiplicative effect — even if it's just a narrow strip, soon electricity will be brought in, additional ditches and trenches will be dug, secondary roads will be opened, and fires will even be deliberately set to burn stumps, clearing forests methodically, piece by piece, from the living flesh of nature.

Now I want to address the most important issue — which is, of course, the problem of forest fires. Because this is exactly what all the officials rely on when trying to develop reserves. And they operate on something they completely don't understand. But it sounds nice, “we are fighting forest fires, that's why we need roads.” Somehow, the destruction of nature becomes a noble mission, right?

Here's a reliable scientific fact: most large forest fires occur precisely in areas where people can easily access the wilderness.

In the United States, scientists compared the density of fire outbreaks on forest lands near roads and away from them. They found that the area within 50 km of a road burns at least 4-5 times more often compared to

protected areas without roads. The farther from the road, the LESS FREQUENT the fires. This proves that roads concentrate fires.

I found similar scientific studies in other countries. For instance, in the Amazon, 85% of fires occur within 5 km of roads. And according to research on the Italian island of Sardinia (where there is a mix of forests and shrubs), scientists proved that fire outbreaks are overwhelmingly concentrated near roads across all types of vegetation.

In October 2024, an interesting scientific paper was published—by the way, I think I mentioned it earlier—titled *"The Edges of Road Fragments Increase the Frequency and Intensity of Forest Fires While Reducing the Total Burned Area"*. In it, scientists conducted computer modeling and proved that the fragmentation of forests by roads in itself leads to an increase in the burning area of the forest by more than 20%. So, just the FACT of expanding road density already potentially means that forest fires in this area will increase by at least tens of percent.

The thing is, the edges of the wilderness, cut by roads, begin to degrade. They are dry, unstable, and it takes just one match for everything to ignite! And nature cannot defend itself — its immune system is disrupted,

the circulation of the microclimate is essentially killed, and there is no transfer of substances and energy.

Thus, scientists worldwide unequivocally state that **IN ANY STUDIED DATA, THE SCALE OF FOREST FIRES SHARPLY DECREASES IF ALL ROADS ARE CUT OFF AND INCREASES WHEN ROADS APPEAR.**

In general, separate materials could be made on the other cascades of additional threats to the forest: from changes in hydrology and erosion to the influx of millions of tourists and poaching. But these are all separate topics for study!

Right now, it's very important to show the real picture of the problem: road construction in reserves is UNACCEPTABLE. Any statements by officials that this is “extremely necessary for firefighting” are unfounded and are only needed as PR campaigns to justify the actual seizure of reserve rent.

Right now, they want to build a network of roads around Lake Baikal — get ready for devastating forest fires even where they never existed. Then the forest will be “urgently cut down as part of sanitary measures.” The same goes for the Losiny Ostrov National Park within Moscow. And the same is happening in all the mountainous ecosystems of our country, where officials

are currently legalizing clear-cutting of forests, even in the most important PROTECTIVE category.

Chapter 13. The sacred tree of Rus: the cedar

I specifically traveled to the ancient Russian town of Ustyuzhna, to the nearby grove with cedar plantings.

I started the Russian Taiga project simply because, during my travels, I saw the horrifying deforestation and realized I couldn't stay silent about it. What's happening to the Russian forests is wrong. It was only during an expedition to Siberia that I understood the true scale and complexity of the problem. I became interested in reforestation, how it's done now, and what experience exists. It turned out that in the past, there were remarkable practical examples of such work. What’s being done now is often just imitation and paperwork.

I devoured the books of the Russian, Soviet scientist and journalist Leonard Fedorovich Ipatov. It turns out that in the northern regions of Rus, the Siberian cedar was long ago and successfully introduced (brought into the culture of forest restoration). Another remarkable person, the Ustyuzhna forester Alexander Adrianovich

Vasiliev, laid out large cedar plantings in 1957.

Ipatov's chapter on the cedars of Ustyuzhna ended with the words: “I don’t know the current state of the Ustyuzhna cedars. But I would love to visit these unique gardens once more in my old age, created for grateful descendants by the tireless Vologda forester Alexander Adrianovich Vasiliev!” I was inspired to assess the current state of this cedar grove and share such a truly positive experience.

The cedar grove is alive! And there are technological details: how to plant, how to care for them. And most importantly, a living example of living trees. From 1957 to 1988, there was a whole wave of cedar plantings across various regions of the USSR. Unfortunately, they didn’t know the tree’s characteristics. And most importantly, numerous forestry reforms, followed by the disappearance of the state that began the state program of forest restoration, including the introduction of cedar. Little remains anywhere.

The tree requires not only planting but also subsequent care. The lifespan of a cedar is hundreds of years. Care and observation are needed for decades. The Ustyuzhenskaya grove is the best preserved and most successful. But even there, it's clear that care stopped at

some point. The cedars are overcrowded. It was probably planned to thin them out after a few years, but this wasn't done. Nevertheless, in the second quarter of the Zalesky forestry, in the Sokolovo area near the ancient Russian town of Ustyuzhna, anyone can still walk among the cedars, touch their trunks, and smell their scent. And these are fruit-bearing cedars! Their fruiting began in 1981. At the age of 22, their yield was 8–9 kg per hectare. Even a small miracle happened: nutcrackers appeared, birds that had never been seen here before, 850 km from the Siberian cedar's range. This once again shows that the forest is a holistic living organism, self-regulating, with numerous connections.

What’s happening now with logging? The plot is cleared (if it’s cleared!) after cutting, an act is signed: all “measures to promote natural forest regeneration” have been carried out, goodbye. And everything becomes overgrown with aspen and birch. These trees grow quickly, overshadowing even the existing “self-seeding” of pine or spruce.

But then, for 10 years, 20 years, “weeding” should be done. The deciduous undergrowth should be cut. In the same Ustyuzhna grove, there was Soviet experience when the local population was involved in this. People were allowed to mow grass in the forest plot, harvest

undergrowth for firewood and household needs. They carried out the necessary thinning of the plots. But now there's no such experience, no methods. We need to consciously form a forest biogeocenosis under human control. Since we intervene so harshly in the ecosystem, massively destroying the "spinal column" of the forest's living organism for our needs. It cannot fully recover on its own afterward.

There's a concept: "city-forming enterprise." Well, there are also "forest-forming trees." The most fantastic of them is our Russian, Siberian cedar. And it grows successfully not only in Siberian regions but also in the conditions of the Northern Russian taiga. Tested. Proven by experience. During my last expedition to the Russian North, I saw everything myself, touched it with my hands. And this experience must not be forgotten; it must be used for the benefit of Russian forests.

The most interesting thing is that the experience of introducing the Siberian cedar in the conditions of the northern European taiga is even longer. Monks planted cedars at monasteries. They considered it a sacred tree. The Koryazhma cedar monastery grove in the Arkhangelsk region is well-known. One of the oldest, according to scientists, is the cedar grove of the Tolga Monastery, 8 km from Yaroslavl. It was planted back in

the 16th century. In the 18th century, monks in southern Karelia also engaged in cedar cultivation: there are cedars on Valaam.

So there you have it, friends. This is our sacred Russian tree, the cedar. According to modern scientific concepts, it's a forest-forming tree. This doesn't negate its sacredness; it only explains it.

Today, Russia doesn't have a national forest restoration program. In the Soviet Union, such a program was beginning to take shape. You can still touch the "fragments" of it. In the Russian Empire, there was remarkable work by foresters of that era, and there are still living "fragments" of it. For now, they remain. And each time, it's only fragments. Currently, minimal reform of forest legislation has begun.

It turns out that the authorities are trying to establish long-term leases of forest plots, shifting the responsibility for forest restoration onto the shoulders of the leaseholders, "optimizing" (that is, bluntly cutting) the state forest protection. I don't believe that a businessman will voluntarily engage in quality forest restoration. It's long and expensive!

The Russian Taiga itself is silent. It dies standing under powerful saws, just as it once did under the axes of loggers. The scale has only increased hundreds of times and continues to grow. And while there are those who lobby for business interests in power, the Russian Taiga has no lobbyists in the Duma. There are only us, the ordinary people. We must not let the issue of deforestation be silenced now. We must not let it "fade into the shadows." We need to gather any remaining experience in forest restoration and new developments. By combining all our voices in defense of the Russian Taiga, we need to create a public demand for a national program to preserve our forests.

And let's not forget about the true national tree of Russia—the cedar. Monks from ancient northern monasteries of the Russian land planted cedar. Here it is, alive today, a positive experience from the foresters of the USSR. Will the sacred Russian tree, the cedar, not have a future in the days to come?!

Chapter 14. The Russian Taiga has been stripped of cedar cones: systemic loss of functions

Recently, many readers have been asking: why cedar? Why are we, in our efforts to help the inhabitants of the Russian Taiga, transporting massive amounts of cedar cones to areas of ecological degradation? To places affected by forest fires and large-scale logging?

The issue became especially pressing after reports from Siberia and the Far East that harvesters had taken every last cedar cone from the taiga. They literally stripped the forest of a key, VITALLY IMPORTANT resource on which the lives of entire species of birds and animals directly depend. And the local forest ecosystems depend on those animals!

Things have reached the point where people bring in migrants by the busload to strip the Russian Taiga of its cedar gold in no time. It is then shipped by the trainload to China, which in turn has a near monopoly on the sale of cedar nuts worldwide. In other words, people are

robbing their own Russian Taiga and leaving animals and birds to starve for the sake of the “economic rise of the Middle Kingdom.”

THE WHOLE POINT IS THAT CEDARS FORM AND SUPPORT THE ECOSYSTEMS OF THE RUSSIAN TAIGA

If you look at your apartment SYSTEMATICALLY, you can see "key processes or technologies" without which an apartment isn’t really an apartment.

How so?

Yes, it’s simpler than you think!

Look, you can confidently call all the engineering structures/communications of your home key technologies/processes. They are "key" because they integrate your home into the processes of material and energy exchange, making it "alive," making it somewhat like a "living system"!

- heating and heat retention;
- cold water supply;
- hot water supply or heating cold water;
- sewage and waste removal;
- electricity supply and lighting.

Have you ever seen an "abandoned" place, a skeleton of a house with long-broken windows?

That’s what an apartment becomes if the "key elements of the system" are lost!

Just a skeleton of a house, where you can guess the shape of the house, but all the useful functions of a dwelling are lost!

And this is exactly the process happening with biological systems!

And while officials tell us how everything is great and wonderful, the living biocenoses of the Russian Taiga are turning into "abandoned places," turning into ruins, with their systemic functions lost!

The most vivid example.

The Siberian cedar.

Not just one of the key species, but a system-forming species in the biocenoses of the boreal northern taiga. Where it grows, of course. In the colder parts of the ecoregion, spruce, fir, or larch might perform these functions.

I’ve written about this: there’s a beautiful poetic image when such trees are called "the mother of all trees." This image perfectly reflects the essence! The whole secret is

in the nuts. In providing BASIC nutrition to other system participants. In storing the energy needed to survive the long, long winter.

It’s like a battery—just imagine your smartphone or laptop WITHOUT a battery. With an electrical network, you can even sit by an outlet and use the device.

Such energy conservation for the entire winter is provided by nut-bearing trees.

The function is primary, but not the only one. There's also the connection with the mycelium and the formation of the forest's mycorrhizal network. And the provision of a local microclimate in the forest. And the forest's overall contribution to the regional climate regime.

And so much more!

The system-forming factor is precisely the accumulation (gathering and preservation) of energy in the winter.

No stockpile of nuts means the birds, mice, and squirrels die of hunger.

Next, the predators died out too, the foxes and wolves.

And in the spring, the kingdom of decomposing corpses was joined by the animals that had fallen into winter hibernation.

And we see some local biocenosis turned into an uninhabited "abandoned place" with broken windows: the trees are still there, but the birds' voices are no longer heard!

I recently looked at photos of a small abandoned town. We have many like that in our country. Both in the Russian North and in Siberia.

In photos taken from afar, it just looks like a city. A cluster of silhouettes of five- and nine-story panel buildings. The fact that this isn't a city, but ruins that were recently a city, simply isn't visible.

And then, in the series of photographs taken closer and closer, the true nature of the object becomes more and more noticeable.

Ruins...

Just the skeleton of a once-living city...

And I remembered that city itself. I walked its streets, and the streets of a dozen similar towns and settlements deep in the Russian Taiga. There really are a lot of such places!

You know, when you walk down these overgrown streets and the window openings of the skeletons of houses stare at you, a growing sense of unease arises. A sense

of wrongness. There are no voices there... No sounds of cars...

The creak of some door swinging in the wind on rusty hinges starts to, quite literally, turn your soul inside out with longing...

I'm sharing this because similar feelings of wrongness arise in some forest areas. No birds... No sounds of life...

It's the same old story—SYSTEMATIC LOSS OF FUNCTIONS BY THE SYSTEM.

Unfortunately, few people notice these processes of losing functionality and viability!

State accounting and control are fundamentally deceptive. The formal numerical indicators of accounting simply don't reflect anything at all!

...the area of forest plantations is 100 hectares...

...the density of the forest planting is 50 trees per hectare...

...the total number of trees...

...the total volume of standing timber...

You get it, right?!

In the same way, you could provide statistics on a dead city that hasn't even been on the map and was closed as an administrative entity thirty years ago!

...twenty streets...

...three hundred houses...

...three schools, seven kindergartens...

...a club, a train station, and an administration building...

It's enough to just not mention that people no longer live there, and those are the RUINS of buildings and structures!

So, in our country (and apparently around the world!), the situation is such that formal state accounting doesn't reflect the systemic function of forests at all!

Essentially, the "corpse of a grandmother" is OFFICIALLY equated to a "grandmother"! But that's not true!

This results in a SYSTEMIC LIE!

The ruins of an uninhabited city are NOT a city!

The corpse of a grandmother is NOT a grandmother!

And the remnants of biocenoses, whose systemic functions are lost, are NOT living biocenoses!

Moreover, I'm raising a question again for which there are simply no terms within the bureaucratic language of the state!

Officials are just genuinely incapable of understanding what it's about because they don't even know such words!

And right now, we're taking a step toward making the mechanical picture of the world more realistic.

For several years, the Russian Taiga project has been implementing a program to help birds in winter.

In recent years, we've seen massive participation from our fellow supporters, massive participation from people in different regions.

And that's encouraging. It means our project is really working!

It means that summarizing experiences, creating methodological recommendations, and setting a living example—all of this together can lead to change!

And now we've encountered a real catastrophe: the Russian Taiga has been STRIPPED of cedar cones, just taken and stupidly cleared out completely. This is already leading to a SYSTEMIC LOSS OF THE FUNCTIONS OF THE RUSSIAN TAIGA. The wild nature

will inevitably turn into ruins, and its inhabitants will go extinct one by one.

I just want to draw your attention once again to an interesting fact:

WE, HUMANS, ARE A KEY ELEMENT OF ECOSYSTEMS!

NOT JUST THE CEDAR, BUT WE OURSELVES!

We shouldn't exclude ourselves from ecosystems—it's a mistake!

We are just as much a part of the Russian Taiga!

And through our actions, we can change a lot!

Chapter 15. The Forest Republic

All of us, even within the framework of modern secular society, inherit certain images and myths from Christian culture. And, of course, some go deeper. The memory of the people from more ancient times is still alive. But Christian metaphors are certainly understood by almost everyone. Remember the legend of the son who sold his birthright for a bowl of bean stew? I've come up with a comparison now.

After an expedition through the Siberian taiga, I conducted two expeditions through the Russian Taiga of Northern Russia. If what I saw in the northern European part of the country were very serious problems, then what's happening with the Russian Taiga in Siberia seems more and more like the last edge before catastrophe. If not already beyond that final line. It increasingly resembles a person selling their ancestral birthright for a bowl of stew right now.

The Russian Taiga was passed down to us from our ancestors. Many generations lived off it. The taiga fed, watered, clothed, and shod our ancestor—the taiga

dweller. They grazed cattle in the clearings and along the riverbanks. They set up apiaries. They plowed and sowed the clearings. They traveled the rivers, explored new lands, and transported goods—traded. The imperial development of the taiga expanses is linked to the thin thread of the railroad that connected our Far East with Europe.

That's when the original "exploitation of natural resources" began. That's when the Russian Taiga, once a nurturing mother, became a source of various useful minerals: timber. And gradually, as we tore apart the living body of the forest, we stopped perceiving this living body as alive. We became numb. We lost our true, human feelings. Today's administrators see the problems too. But they can't think beyond "economic feasibility."

A person remains a person, regardless of whether they hold some leadership position. We are all products of our upbringing. We inherit the culture created by our ancestors. And then we ourselves reform this culture, introducing modern elements into it. We are now creating the culture of the future, by the norms of which our children will live. Leaders, "responsible workers" in today's society, are products of a technological, industrial culture.

Specially trained, with a developed "economic mindset of a leader." A product, alas, morally outdated. This "economic" attitude isn't just towards the living body of the Russian Taiga. "Flock"—here's another term from biblical imagery. "Flock" and "shepherds." Herd and shepherds, in modern language. And feeding one's own parents in their old age, it turns out, is "economically unfeasible." Right? And this is dictated by the "economic mindset of a leader," isn't it?

It's hard not to compare the "shepherds" overseeing the Russian Taiga today with those "temporary managers." Their task is to get as much money as possible, as quickly as possible. It doesn't matter that they're "slaughtering" for next to nothing a herd they didn't raise. The main thing is speed. And without spending on "healing—feeding—raising."

Look at the Russian Taiga as a whole. Our country stretches across the entire Eurasian continent. The Taiga has been preserved in the Russian North of the European part and as a strip along the south of Siberia. There are no forests in the north of Siberia. The Russian Taiga is still vast. But its resources are not limitless. What remains has already been "gnawed" away in chunks considerably. And modern technology is much more powerful than it was under the Tsar or the Soviets.

The pace of "gnawing" away chunks is accelerating.

Now look at the Russian Taiga from a historical perspective. And in terms of strategic future, at least a decade or two ahead. It’s now 2018. Twenty years ago, it was 1998. Some remember it themselves. Those who don’t can not only read about that time but also ask their elders in person. It’s not like “fighting the Fritz in ’41” or “beating the Swede at Poltava.” There are living witnesses, not just literary accounts. What cell phone did you use then? What computer? What car did you drive? This directly relates to the future of both the Russian Taiga and the individual. Because everything is interconnected, everything is part of the overall changes in our society and the world as a whole.

Now let’s look to the future. What’s the “allowed” average life expectancy in our country now, 71 years? So, the personal perspective for 20 years ahead concerns anyone who is not yet 50 years old. Even for the “childfree,” who believe that “raising children is economically unfeasible.” For anyone, even those who live by the principle “after me, the flood.” It’s clear that technology is developing faster and faster.

Both computer and information technologies will continue to develop at an accelerating pace. Fully automated production and 3D printers don't surprise anyone now. The significance of hydrocarbon fuel, which currently seems to be the "golden reserve" of our country, is predictably decreasing. So, what will increase in value? The value of modern technologies and possession of information, that's one. Even wars, look, are "cyber." Beyond that, it's not so obvious, but if you think about it a little, it's not that hard. What becomes a strategic resource, the price of which is rising? That which is scarce and not enough for everyone. That which is in demand. That which is sought after.

Now open an environmental map of the world. There are different types of these maps: general, air, water. But they all show about the same thing. Europe and the USA are "dirty." But China looks like a real "black hole." Clean water, clean air, and sources of clean food will become the most valuable strategic resources faster than it seems. The Russian Taiga is all of this. The Russian Taiga is a source of clean air, a source of clean water, and a "deposit" of clean products. Not just a "timber deposit."

Now take another look at Siberia and the Siberian taiga. Lease contracts are currently being signed with China for forest plots for 49 years. These are very large plots, and at the state level. Chinese capital is involved in very large projects for building enterprises in Siberia, like pulp and paper mills, etc. The projects, however, seem to be poorly planned. Unprofitable. There's not even enough raw material in the region for them. Yet, in anticipation of future cooperation, new transportation routes are being built to connect China and our territories. Now consider these actions not just for a 20-year perspective, but for a 50-year perspective of accelerating technological development. It no longer seems so poorly planned, rather, quite the opposite.

Let's return to the current situation. If we dig a little deeper, Chinese investments in the Siberian Taiga's forests aren't all that interested. More precisely, the Russian Taiga isn't their only and irreplaceable source of timber. Under similar, throwaway conditions, they also take timber from African countries. Why not, if the people of Africa allow themselves to be treated that way? There's an established term "banana republic" with a very specific meaning.

Siberia, for international capital, primarily Chinese, is today a kind of "forest republic." It's a direct analogy to the term "banana republic." Yes, we are part of the global market. Yes, the global free market is necessary. It's necessary for us too. The question is, in what capacity and under what conditions do we participate in this "free market"? Timber is processed. Some final processed products are produced and eventually sold. When, by massively cutting down the Russian Taiga, we get maybe 10%, at most, of the final product's price, what is that? That's a "banana forest republic."

And this isn't the only possibility for "international cooperation." The same Chinese business also buys timber from New Zealand. Only on clearly regulated terms and for reasonable money. Otherwise, they can't, as the New Zealand authorities don't allow it.

Business is interested in profit. Including ours, the Russian one. Large businesses, even those originally Russian, become transnational. The concept of "sustainable development of territories" is unknown to them. Regional administrations often don't even try to plan beyond their term limits, say, for five years. They lazily nod: "Well, these problems were left to us by our predecessors." And the problems just keep piling up. The federal government tries to set strategic goals.

Slowly. With "moral obsolescence." Encountering resistance from regional elites defending local interests.

But most importantly, our society as a whole, just like the Russian Taiga, is also a complex system. Also a large superorganism. If you don't have pain receptors in your hand, your brain won't "know" that you've foolishly put your hand in the fire. The hand will burn. The brain will then start to wonder: "Where's that barbecue smell coming from?" Perhaps due to the remoteness of the Far East and Siberia from the center, perhaps due to the small population in the taiga regions, but our society suffers from such a "nerve conduction disorder." The task for everyone now is, first of all, to restore this "nerve conduction." What clearly smells like burning meat is already reaching the authorities.

Then we need to establish proper management. Right now, our leaders are like Red Army commanders with cavalry experience in the era of tank battles during the Great Patriotic War. They have a clear "economic mindset" from the period of "industrialization and industrial development." But you can't operate with concepts that are fifty years old. Massive global deforestation and giant enterprises are outdated. They're not even economically efficient. We need leaders who at least understand what a biocenosis is. The very

concepts of "forest development" and "commercial timber resources" should be replaced with "management of local biocenoses" and "comprehensive use of biocenosis resources."

Technological stratification in today's world is happening at an ever-accelerating pace. While somewhere they're printing new organs on a 3D bioprinter and editing genes, in the taiga regions of our country, old men are sawing birch for firewood with a two-man saw because they don't have chainsaws. I saw it myself just a week ago. A hectare of taiga for logging is sold for a nominal thousand rubles (in reality, much cheaper!). It's cut down irreversibly. Even government agencies aren't satisfied with the natural replacement of valuable coniferous wood with less valuable deciduous wood during "measures to promote natural forest regeneration."

Alternatively, this same hectare could bring in a nominal hundred thousand rubles annually, without being depleted and used by humans indefinitely. When a forest plantation is cultivated there. Herbs, mushrooms, and berries are collected. Birch and maple sap, resin from conifers. A forest apiary is set up. Even selective logging provides some timber. And a local, small processing enterprise creates real jobs in the region. This would be

a true forest republic, vibrant and future-oriented. Not a disgraceful "banana forest republic," which is what the Russian Taiga is turning into now.

Chapter 16. Exploring the world: a journey that never ends

Many people are convinced that the world has already been explored and studied, and that the era of true explorers is long gone. They say there's nothing left to discover!

The age of geographical discoveries is over.

There are no unexplored corners left on Earth.

Everything has long been discovered and studied.

I’ve heard this since I was a child. From teachers at school, from family and friends! I still hear it today from those around me. Even as a kid, I found it much more interesting to read Jack London, whose stories were filled with the Will to Live, a vast and unexplored world, and heroes who were conquering it.

I guess it's time for me to say: the 'explored world' is the biggest self-deception possible! And I'm not talking about space and other stars or even planets that we humans haven't even come close to reaching! I'm talking about the 'here' and 'now,' about the paths and roads of

Mother Earth.

Our world seems so accessible and known: maps, GPS, satellite images, thousands of books and scientific articles about every corner of the planet. But do we really know it as thoroughly as we think? Let's look deeper into this illusion, peeking behind the slightly open door of our perceptions of Earth.

When we say the world is explored, we often mean that all physical boundaries are delineated and described. And indeed, the major outlines of continents, rivers, and mountains have long been marked on maps. But even with all the technical capabilities, humanity still lacks complete information about many regions. New currents appear. Natural and climatic conditions change. Some deserts expand while others shrink, for example. And many of these changes happen too quickly or, conversely, so slowly that they are hard to track year by year. And, please, we see how even the freshest and most accurate maps lie to us!

Take, as the brightest example, the oceans. They cover more than 70% of Earth's surface, and yet we know less about them than about the Moon. Underwater mountains, trenches, ecosystems—most of them remain unexplored. Mysterious creatures, astonishing

geological formations, and unsolved phenomena await on the patient shores of science, which still cannot reach all the depths.

Even on land, there are areas with minimal human interference. In remote corners of the Amazon, tribes live that have never contacted civilization. In the highlands of the Himalayas or the dense forests of Siberia, there are many places where perhaps few have ever set foot. And while I can only speculate about the Himalayas or the Amazon, I can speak with certainty about the Russian Taiga: Yes, I have personally been to places where no human had set foot before me!

Wild animals living in such regions could tell us much about nature and its evolution. If only we understood their language, of course. And I have personally encountered animals that were not afraid of humans. Which was a clear indicator to me: seeing me, they were seeing a human for the first time. Unfortunately, this is a precise indicator: we humans bring death and destruction with us. And the first to arrive in the last refuges of wild nature are usually hunters with long-range weapons in helicopters.

Modern technologies, such as drones and satellite reconnaissance, open new possibilities for researchers, but they also have limitations. Even high-quality images and photos are just the tip of the iceberg of information: they cannot tell us about the animal or plant world, about ecosystems and their interactions, or about the impact of changing climatic conditions on them.

Another aspect of our planet's unexplored nature is the cultural diversity of peoples. Is this diversity really so well-studied? There are languages that die without ever being recorded, rituals that disappear without leaving any trace in history. Only recently have we begun to take a more serious approach to studying the cultures of people whose worlds seem too different from our own.

Anthropologists continue to find tribes never before seen, discover lost civilizations, and explore interactions of societies in the past about which we had only vague ideas. And even I have met people deep in the Russian Taiga who begged: Please, just don't tell anyone that we live here!

Let's also look at the world of microbes and microorganisms. This is a true invisible continent, embedded in every patch of land, in all bodies of water, and even on our own bodies. With each new

achievement in biology, we learn who lives around us and what kinds of interactions occur within us.

New species of bacteria and viruses continue to be discovered, revealing how they interact with other forms of life and adapt to modern changes in the surrounding world. Can you imagine? Now imagine that the retreating permafrost of the Russian North turned out to be not so “permanent,” and scientists are already finding numerous unknown life forms that they can't even classify!

Science is making great strides toward understanding the complex interactions between different biological organisms in various ecosystems. We are only beginning to grasp the intricate and tangled dance of the cycle of matter and energy on a planet born from billions of years of evolution. The impact of human activity on this complex network remains largely unexplored, as does the possibility of repairing the damage we've caused. Doesn't it frighten you that we are destroying countless living organisms without even knowing they exist?!

It's worth considering the changes occurring not due to our actions, the cataclysms against which even modern technology is utterly powerless. Earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, mystical changes in animal

migration paths—in all this, we are merely students without full confidence in what to expect and how to prevent or mitigate the consequences.

It's a mistake to think that the exploration of the world ends at the physical level. Research is also conducted at the level of human experience. Psychology, philosophy, and art are constantly exploring and evolving, revealing new horizons of perception and understanding of reality. Just as with nature, there are areas here where human knowledge has only lightly touched the surface, not reaching the deeper layers of our consciousness and interpersonal connections.

The world of ideas is as mysterious and boundless as the world of matter. It holds limitless prospects for self-discovery and understanding our connections with other aspects of the universe. As we expand the boundaries of what is possible, each new answer generates dozens of new questions.

So what awaits us? Will the myth of the complete mastery of Earth continue to exist, stifling our exploratory spirit, or will we dare to acknowledge the vastness and multifaceted nature of our planet?

Humanity has always sought and will continue to seek new open horizons. In this quest for knowledge and discovery, the key is not only to uncover the unknown but also to learn to respect the mysterious, always ready to reveal something new and astonishing. The world is rich with knowledge and secrets, like every drop of water that, falling on the surface, creates ripples of waves spreading across the ocean of time.

And if someone tells you: The world is explored, the era of great discoveries is over!

—add to their phrase in your mind: It's over for you, not for me, because you've created illusory boundaries for yourself!—

...and set off on a journey into the unknown, which never ends! Become an explorer and dedicate your life to something great.

Chapter 17. "Unsystematic opinion" or a vision of the future horizon?

What do human rights advocates have? Words. Words are practically the only thing available to the public in the fight for their rights. I don't support the laws being introduced today in attempts to silence public demand against environmental issues. It's the landfills, the destruction of forests, and viewing ecology as a potential profit source that disrupt the connection between Humans and Nature. We've long crossed the line of reason. Yet, we're continually convinced otherwise.

I'm told my materials are "unsystematic nonsense." When I say that a forest is primarily a Forest Ecological System. When I say that instead of transporting trash from the overpopulated Moscow region to the pristine forests of the Arkhangelsk region, we should be building waste processing facilities. Don't just haul trash back and forth—process it! Using a scientific, modern approach. Yes, it's expensive. Yes, it won't be profitable

in the coming years, and moreover, we lack the experience in our country. But other countries have this experience! We chose the simplest option: gather trash from a region with too many people (protests against landfills in the Moscow region showed that the situation destabilizes instantly) and transport it to one of the least populated regions. In 2016, the Arkhangelsk region had over 1,700,000 people. According to Rosstat data for 2019, it's less than 1,200,000. That's half a million fewer! Now, the population statistics for the Moscow region: as of 2019, according to Rosstat, the region's population is 7,503,385 (and that's just officially!).

The situation with landfills destabilizes society in one of the most densely populated regions of the country. I remember when they tried to dump trash in various regions, including the Tver region! People rose up there too. They resisted as best they could. Even though the population in the Tver region is also low, it's still too close to the center, and there's a risk of the same destabilization. The solution was found: the Arkhangelsk region. There's nothing easier than loading trash into trains and just transporting it there!

There are technologies that allow for relatively safe waste processing. Moreover, these technologies have long been tested by highly developed countries and have

proven successful. The government could create a special team of specialists who could negotiate with the Swedish authorities—go there, study their "waste reform" experience, where the country practically has no trash left. They simply process it! Moreover, the country has achieved nearly 100% waste processing. Sweden recycles 50.6% of all waste; burns 48.6% for energy production, and only 0.8% of waste goes to landfills. If our government doesn't know how they achieved this, the Swedish authorities have long offered to share this experience with the world. Adopting this experience and using it for the benefit of our land is the right step, not hauling trash back and forth.

My recent materials are still being extensively commented on by both the public and the government. Some say it's (I'll repeat) "nonsensical rambling." What can I say? Of course, my opinion is nonsystemic. Because today's system is entirely focused on making money. The system today is 90% of all financial assets in the hands of 3% of people (according to statistics from the Higher School of Economics and Vnesheconombank) and a lack of checks and balances. And anyone who points out the flaws to these 3% is labeled as someone spouting "nonsensical rambling" without any meaning or adequate proposals.

One of the biggest challenges in preserving the Russian Taiga is that no one sees the problems. The taiga regions of the country have always been sparsely populated. The population of Russia as a whole is decreasing. But the population decline is even faster in the taiga, which is already nearly uninhabited.

The area of Siberia is about 77% of Russia's total territory. Meanwhile, the population is around 25% of the country's total. Approximately 36 million people (according to Wikipedia). Since the 2000s, in the 21st century, Siberia's population has decreased by 3 — 4 — 5 million (according to various sources). At the same time, there is a significant migration from villages to cities within the regions. The government is trying to solve the problem using various methods. These include the "Far Eastern Hectare" program and long-standing "return of compatriots" programs. There have even been "special projects" inviting Russian citizens from the North Caucasus republics, where birth rates are high, to Siberia. Nothing works. People keep leaving just as they always have.

Are they really trying to solve the problem, or just putting on a show?!

Here's a new project. I quote "Kommersant" (No. 44 from 03/14/2019): "The Kremlin has formed an institutional infrastructure aimed at ensuring the relocation to Russia of as many people as possible from neighboring countries. The ambitious goal: to make 5–10 million people new Russians. The donor countries being considered are those with a high concentration of Russian-speaking populations—Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Moldova."

I don't get it: how do they plan to "make 5–10 million people new Russians" with the current attitude towards people? By force, maybe? Buy them on the global slave market?! Probably the only realistic option. Except that slave trading is supposedly banned. There are no slave markets. Officially, at least. And voluntarily—it doesn't quite align with "government support measures."

Official statistics indicate that over the past three years, there has been a sharp increase in the number of people leaving Russia altogether. Around 300,000 or more people per year. A million have left during this time to live permanently in other countries. True, almost as many have entered from the countries of the former USSR. With two nuances: fewer are entering, and more are leaving each year. And, as I understand it, the most active and educated people are the ones leaving. As for

those arriving—I doubt they are the best.

This is all open statistics, Rosstat. The authors of "ambitious projects" can't be unaware of something like this. So, are these just loud words, an imitation of activity? Or, even more intriguingly, is it the preparation of legislative justifications to simplify obtaining Russian citizenship for citizens of any country, not just the "profiled" ones? China, for example? Back in Stalin's time, "his own two hundred million" were enough. And now there's a shortage? Has Mao's proposal to "gift twenty million" become relevant?

It's all so strange when they talk about a population shortage, yet they relentlessly complicate life for that very population. And the "government support measures for the population" just look like some kind of clown show. What a laughable "Far Eastern hectare," when even during the "Stolypin" resettlement program to Siberia, they gave out 15 desyatinas per "male soul"? That's 15 hectares, 15 times more! And for the Cossacks, of whom there were quite a few, 20–50 hectares. Have they become greedy? Or is it, once again, all just a simulation of action?

Our land, the Russian Taiga, isn't separate from us. The Taiga is for the people. It's the heritage of our nation. Yet, it's unclear who's using it... People are scattering...

But the "Dear Sirs" promise to buy a new batch of people?! They're a bit strange: what's wrong with their own people? Why poison your own people first, then bring in new ones?

Chapter 18. How much is our homeland worth?

I'm diving straight into politics because there are questions—and I can't find the answers. Our government is rapidly selling off all the natural resources, which primarily belong to our children, into private hands. But not just any private hands—literally to anyone ready to pay for them right now! Millions of hectares of untouched taiga, water from the sacred Baikal, oil, gas, and even gold (remember Dmitry Medvedev and the decrees he signed allowing China to mine gold in Russia).

In Siberia and the Far East, there are still forests (though very damaged), but despite this, Chinese companies are already setting up logging operations in central Russia and are ready to export timber from here back to their homeland. This means they are clearly aiming for a very long-term operation. But this isn't Siberia... China is far away... and yet they are ready to do it. The government grants the right to manage our land to the PRC for 49 years with the option (!) to

extend! But we don't see any investments... no jobs either... people in the regions are still starving and going missing. How does it go? No money, but hang in there? We are forbidden from insulting the authorities, yet literally every day we hear another deputy mocking the people. Like saying, "you weren't asked to give birth" or "teachers, you're not needed by anyone—go start a business." This creates noise... but amidst this noise, someone is raking in billions into the pockets of capitalists. After all, China pays. Pays someone, but definitely not us!

Now a question for my readers: where are our esteemed gentlemen planning to run off to? We see the country's resources have been sold off. I'm almost certain the president is in his last term... All the monopolists and deputies in the presidential administration have a second citizenship (meaning they're already not ours). Right now, someone is diligently trading Russia and its people for Chinese capital... and not gradually, but very, very quickly.

As I defend the forests, I barely have time to catch my breath before Chinese woodworking companies appear in the region I just passed through. They don't hire our people (except maybe for small local sawmills). Messages are coming in from all over the country! My

inbox is flooded, and the moderators can't keep up. This shows that people know and see everything.

Let's think about this question!

I want specific and clear changes in society. Today, more than ever, people are starting to wake up and look around! Essentially, the deep sleep during which we were blatantly robbed was a well-planned strategy riding the wave of technological progress: TV, the internet, social networks, and so on. It's like giving a person two realities; sooner or later, everyone starts confusing events. It's the same here! And today is exactly when changes are coming. People are waking up and starting to ask questions (which is why the authorities are introducing laws about "fake news" and "insulting the authorities"—it's all connected). It's not too late to fix everything, but if we take a step back—we'll be completely overwhelmed!

So what happened? Plain and simple!

— Enterprises across the country have been destroyed. Everything built during Soviet times is now ruined: collective farms, industries. Natural resources were monopolized by private individuals, and the mindless extraction of all the subsoil began! Meanwhile, we export almost nothing; only imports come into the

country. In the literal sense, Russia has been turned into a raw material colonial empire.

Let me illustrate with my region, where I was born and raised! In the Altai mountains, collective farms used to operate in the settlements, producing goods, machinery plants were working, industries existed, there were schools, kindergartens, hospitals. Now everything is destroyed and ruined! They simply crushed any independence and autonomy of people in the regions, thereby making them dependent on government handouts.

— An artificial enemy was created in the form of "America." But believe me, all the fighting (sanctions and other nonsense) is just a muscle-flexing game by private owners of oil/gas/timber companies in Russia (and almost none of them are Russian citizens) with private owners of Western monopolists. That's it! Their squabbles don't concern us. At all! But they stubbornly drill the opposite into our heads. By creating an enemy, they divert people's attention from real problems to imaginary ones.

— Amidst the noise and clamor about "Western aggression," a unique ecosystem in the regions is being destroyed. And there are no secrets or mysteries here:

it's just about money! They monopolize the forests, water resources, and sell land for agriculture to the same Chinese who poison the soil with powerful chemicals. There are numerous testimonies, reports, and materials on this. Not only is there massive destruction of Russia's forests, but the environmental situation is critically alarming. We remember the protests across the country against the landfills that first overwhelmed the Moscow region and are now being spread to other regions. Moreover, they plan to dump this trash in the virgin forests of the Russian North.

"— Right now, amidst the wave of trash protests in the country, a waste reform has been created. In practice, it's very simple: if you rise up against waste disposal, then everyone will pay an additional tribute for the removal and disposal of MSW and TBO! And the waste reform now is simply a monopoly to shut people up (that's one!) and make everyone pay money (that's two!). Now, more details! You all know me as a defender of Russia's forests."

You know that in the fall of 2018, I conducted an expedition through the forests of the Republic of Karelia when local authorities (including the governor) started to rise against "the upstart Pavel Pashkov, who is causing a provocation." Fortunately, all the local media

and residents supported me. I accidentally discovered and filmed a horrifying landfill right in the swamps, near Lake Ladoga (where the poisoned waters from the dump flow). After publishing the video, the regional authorities lashed out at me, stating, "we know about our 256 similar dumps, and this dump is legal." I was shocked! Because this legal dump violates all the laws on MSW placement! Absolutely all of them. The article and video can be found on my official website, with precise explanations (search for it). And so I began to study the topic of landfills more closely, considering that before this I exclusively defended forests and didn't get involved in the "trash business." I discovered that in Karelia, with the arrival of a new governor (a year in power, appointed by President Vladimir Putin), all waste removal companies were destroyed and a single "trash monopolist" was created. At that time, I wrote that soon the same pattern would occur across the country! Which we are now witnessing. The dumps remain, everything is buried in trash, violations upon violations... and all actions and concerns are pure fiction. Now the same thing is shaking all of Russia! That's why the waste reform is nothing more than an additional monopoly on tribute from the population. Just money and nothing personal.

— The Russian Taiga is being destroyed on a staggering scale. Forests are being destroyed across all regions. For many years, the government did not acknowledge the problem, and only after our public pressure, at the end of 2018, did the highest authorities recognize that the destruction of forests is a global problem for the country. But acknowledging the problem doesn't mean it will be solved. Unfortunately! And if we back down now, nothing will change. Absolutely nothing!

I want change. And I will continue my activities to protect Russia's forests! I am currently preparing an international manifesto and planning new projects that will draw public attention to real problems. The choice is up to each of us! In ancient Egypt, slaves built pyramids for the "great" pharaohs, fearing punishment... violence and cruelty, madness and idiocy kept people in fear.

So what about us, are we going to build pyramids, carrying bricks for monopolist-pharaohs, or will we build a homeland for our Great Children? Talk about the problems. Take your own steps to restore the forests! One planted tree won't solve the problem of deforestation, but it will be your step toward the future and, moreover, set an example for others. And if a million people follow your example, we will have a new forest of a million trees.

Chapter 19. There's only one problem—the government doesn't listen to the people

There's only one problem in our country—the government doesn't listen to the people at all. And it's not just our country; it's like this all over the world. All environmental problems today are solvable. There are new technologies that don't harm the environment. Scientists and researchers understand that our civilization has truly reached a critical point. In just the last few decades, human impact on nature has been accelerating. Just a little more, and the process of destroying the environment (and thus self-destruction!!!) will be unstoppable. But for now (for now!), there's a chance to change our attitude toward our habitat. And there are new technologies to do it!

There's just one snag worldwide: A BUNCH OF ULTRA-RICH PEOPLE PROFITING FROM OLD TECHNOLOGIES DON'T WANT TO CHANGE ANYTHING!

THINK ABOUT IT!

According to statistics, there are 3% like that in our country.

THREE PERCENT of those who not only control the government but are the government themselves. And this small part of the population profits from outdated, environmentally harmful technologies. From commercial enterprises where everything is about making money, and environmental harm isn't considered. And this handful of people is destroying our shared world in the pursuit of profit!

One question needs to be solved: how do we make these 3% listen to us?! We are the majority—97%!

Someone asked me: “Pavel, is it true that the Chinese are cutting down all the taiga? That's basically war; they've taken us over!” I want to clarify this right away. The thing is, today the yellow press cleverly manipulates people, trying to grab attention, or conversely, those interested in keeping people from “panicking” invest good money to create a so-called reverse effect on the problems.

I talked about this in detail in my book "Temple of the Gods" and even showed search results (a whopping 85 million results). With cries of: “Pavel Pashkov is creating

a fake about deforestation or how the Chinese took over Siberia," they start publishing refutations on various platforms. Claiming there's no deforestation, no Chinese, and no problems at all (even though the entire government has acknowledged the problems—such misinformation is still spread and even finds its audience).

That's why I want everyone to have a clear understanding of what's happening. Indeed, there are practically no Chinese "tree destroyers" in the forests. Why bring them in when our own people are forced and ready to work for a bowl of soup, breaking their backs in logging camps? The truth is, Chinese businessmen (monopolists, shareholders, founders—whatever you call them) don't cut down the forest; they run it. And this fact has been repeatedly confirmed by TV, media, and public figures.

For those not too lazy, you can open the list of timber companies in the Irkutsk region and just look at the names of the directors and co-founders. There are Chinese names everywhere. And where we didn't find Chinese names, digging deeper, it turned out the companies were registered to front people. Again, they belong to the Chinese. The problem isn't that the Chinese are evil and came to cut down our forests. The

problem is, who allowed them? It's our government. The authorities invented the law on “Territories of Advanced Development,” which practically gifts our land to Chinese “allies.” The authorities abandoned the regions of Siberia and the Far East, practically destroying factories, enterprises, and agriculture that had been successfully operating since Soviet times... essentially leaving people to “survive on their own.” They effectively dismantled forest legislation (I refuse to acknowledge its current format). Handle it however you want! But don't forget to pay taxes and keep quiet. How did those “high-government” tales go? No money—but hang in there. That's how our regions survive today. And I genuinely feel sorry for the people who are hostages of the situation.

Just imagine. You're a successful Chinese businessman. You have a million dollars, and you want to invest it in a profitable venture! And here comes the Russian government, drooling over big money, saying:

— A million dollars? Awesome! Give us that million, and we'll let you cut down as much forest as you want! Cool, right?

You scratch your head and wonder:

— Hmm! But don't we need to restore the forest after logging? That's costly, and I don't want to bother. Plus, there are taxes, duties, fees... documents to make!

— No! — the government smiles. — Taxes are for our people. You give us a million and do whatever you want!

— Seriously? — you wonder. — But can I get guarantees? It's scary; I don't trust it.

And then the government introduces the "TOR" law—no duties, no work patents, no oversight. Essentially, they hand you a piece of paper: "You're the boss here! Just give us a mil and do whatever you want!" That's it. Here's your guarantee! That's the situation in the regions today in a nutshell. The government doesn't want to bother with fixing the mess in "depressed areas." After all, it takes effort and huge resources! It's easier for them to dump it all on someone else.

You've probably heard the comparisons about the Amur coast, right? On one side, there's the highly developed China, and on the other, a devastated Russian village where people barely scrape by. It seems the government has decided that if they hand over Siberia and the Far East to the "care" of the PRC, they'll immediately build cities, restore enterprises, and establish perfect order. As a bonus, there'll be China's political patronage on the

international stage! Quite something, huh?

But there's one catch. Chinese businessmen have no reason to develop our land. They're interested in resources! Come in, take out, cut down, destroy. Take away the legacy of our children. And it's not their fault that they're from another country, another nation, and faith. I see no difference between our monopolists with their thirst for money and monopolists from any other country in the world.

And when the time comes that there are more Chinese residents in the regions than the native population—nothing will stop them from taking to the streets and declaring independence. Then there will be no need to pay a million dollars to Moscow. Why? The land will rightfully be theirs. And then, perhaps, they'll build their highly developed cities there. And maybe, on both sides of the Amur, there will be metropolises.

Chapter 20. Why do people from remote areas not want to protect nature and react aggressively to the fight for the Russian Taiga?

What is ecological apathy?

— is it a temporary effect of a shocked society?

— or is it a systemic effect of the "transition from building communism to building capitalism" in post-Soviet society after the collapse of the USSR?

— or a defect in the management system, with society having nothing to do with it?

Why do residents of taiga regions often not only turn away from protecting "their forest," but also have a negative attitude towards environmental and animal protection communities?

Why are residents of large cities at least somewhat willing to participate in nature conservation, while those in remote taiga areas are not at all?

And most importantly, is the problem of a "passive society" solvable?

Let me say right away to all readers: I am considering not only complex but also contentious, "emotionally charged" questions.

You might personally disagree with something.

Something might even make you angry.

Set it aside. Reread it later. With a "cool" head.

I write texts that touch on such sharp topics not to cause discord within our already small environmental community.

I write to find a way out of the crisis situation.

First.

"Soap the judge, scrap the whistle!" — this is the least constructive approach.

I often write articles criticizing the actions of officials. But this criticism is aimed at improving the work of government bodies. And even more so at improving the connection between society and the authorities.

— electronic platforms should become a means of communication between people and agencies, not a means of isolating the authorities from society's

demands — this is probably the most important thing right now. In the context of modern technology.

Second.

A return to Soviet practices and some sort of "USSR 2.0" is impossible!

I often write about the positive experiences of the USSR, especially about the reserve system created during the 20th century.

But!

I fully understand the impossibility of returning to the past.

We are being deliberately confused, being offered a counterfeit of Soviet practices.

The Soviet system of nature reserves was not perfect. It was harsh. It was oppressive. It was bureaucratic.

But it had one important distinction: nature was considered a national treasure.

Nature was respected as the foundation of the people's well-being, not just as something to be managed.

Today, nature is merely an object of "monetization."

Reserves are now at best "environmental risk managers." They are no longer primarily seen as scientific centers, as they were in the Soviet Union.

The forest is a "carbon cemetery." The only new understanding added to "timber deposits."

The local resident is an "illegal resource user." And even if legal, still not welcome.

It's all about money and statistics. The meaning is lost. What's left is an empty shell of words, devoid of real substance.

It's no wonder people don't want to save what holds no meaning for them. What is someone else's property, from which some distant, unreasonably wealthy person continues to extract benefits unknown to the common person.



Third.

City dwellers:

— are significantly more numerous than those in the taiga regions;

— city dwellers often have more free time for various activities, including public engagement. A direct result of a higher material standard of living compared to those in rural areas.

This creates the illusion that city dwellers are more active. But that's not true—social passivity significantly affects the entire society.

Fourth.

So what are the reasons for this societal lethargy now?

Why doesn't even the taiga dweller protect the forest?!

After all, it's his home!

The answer is simple. As is often the case, the answer lies within the question itself.

Because the forest has ceased to be his home.

Imagine: you are a descendant of a family that has lived in this taiga for three generations. Your grandfather fished in the river, which is now a restricted zone. Your father cut down trees to build a cabin, and now he's threatened with fines for it. Your son moved to the city because "there's no future here."

And now people show up wearing jackets with logos like “WWF,” “Greenpeace,” or “Freaking Amazing Forest.” They say: “You can’t cut trees. You can’t hunt. You can’t burn. That disrupts the ecosystem.”

You are not an enemy of nature. You're not even a lost son of it. You're a homeless person, someone without a permanent residence, now being driven out of your last refuge. Almost like a wild animal.

You don't want to destroy the forest.

You simply don't know how to preserve it when it stops being part of your life and becomes foreign. It becomes a foreign law by which you can be punished, but you don't always understand why.

Ecological apathy isn't a lack of feelings or conscience. It's a lack of rights. It's learned helplessness. It's the passive aggression of victimized people.

The right to tradition.

The right to knowledge passed from father to son.

The right for the forest to be yours.

The right for your voice to matter.

When you're a taiga dweller, a fisherman, a hunter, and they tell you, "You're to blame," instead of, "Let's think together about how to live with this forest," you don't become an enemy of nature.

You become an enemy of those who speak on behalf of nature but don't know what it's like to live in it.

A city dweller can join a "Save the Forest" rally because they don't live in it. They can "atone for their guilt" and forget about it with a "sense of deep satisfaction."

A taiga dweller cannot.

Because for them, ecology isn't an abstraction. It's often a daily struggle for survival. It's haymaking. It's firewood. It's livestock maintenance. It's poverty when you live off the taiga like in ancient times: gathering wild garlic or ferns in spring to survive. And you go to the forest for mushrooms or berries not for fun, but for food. If you don't gather enough, there'll be nothing to eat in winter.

And if you tell them, "You shouldn't cut down the forest," then you must offer them an alternative.

If there's no alternative, then you're offering death. To them and their family.

Who's to blame? Not the officials. Not the city dwellers. Not the taiga dwellers themselves. And not "capitalism."

The blame lies in the gap between two worlds. Or even three or more worlds.

On one side is the intellectual world, which speaks the language of terms: biodiversity, ecosystem services, sustainable development.

On the other is the real world of life, which speaks the language of: "Where do I go? How do I feed my children? Who will give me a job if I'm not the master of my own home?"

These two worlds don't just misunderstand each other.

They don't see each other. They don't intersect like parallel lines.

And there's a third world of officials, where reports matter, and for whom both the local population and ecologists with their incomprehensible jargon are just annoying obstacles ruining reports.

And then there's a fourth world, where an entrepreneur buys a forest on an electronic trading platform and needs to turn that forest into money as quickly as possible with the least expenses. He couldn't care less about people, forest animals, officials, or intangible entities like ethics, honor, or homeland. The legal owners of the forest plots haven't always even seen these forests. Most of the time, they don't need to.

Fifth.

What should we do to overcome stagnation in society and achieve results?

Of course, I don't have a definitive answer.

The search for such an answer is the main reason for writing this article.

For now, I only have my personal reflections:

— "just allocate funds" or "legislate a ban" — these are guaranteed not to work. Proven.

— "restore the USSR" or "plant a billion trees" — that's just fantasy. Self-deception.

The only solution is a change in people's worldview. You can't "build communism" in a single country. You can't even "build communism" worldwide — it's an idea, a metaphor, a utopia.

You can (and should!) "build communism" within yourself.

First, you accept yourself as part of nature. As part of the surrounding world, not as the "ruler of nature." You accept yourself with all your weaknesses and shortcomings included.

Then you build relationships with those whose worldview is close to yours.

You gather fellow supporters.

And now we are with you. Together. Through joint efforts. Doing the most we can.

— We slow down criminal bills even knowing we can't completely stop their passage. But even this is time won for the Life of ecosystems.

— Through our words and actions, we spread the ideology of Life instead of the ideology of profit.

— We become the seeds of the future.

And now, the more difficult life and the economy become, the more important it is for us to preserve ourselves and our voice.

And to establish connections.

To listen not only to the voice of the Russian Taiga but also to other people:

— listen to the voice of the city dweller, who knows many smart words but is as clueless in the taiga as a puppy.

— listen to the voice of the taiga old-timer, who doesn't want to hear from ecologists or officials and just wants to be left alone.

— listen to the voice of the official, who often balances between opposing demands that need to be met simultaneously.

— listen to the voice even of the "owner of the taiga," who bought this taiga on an electronic marketplace but has never been there.

Because people all together are also part of the Russian Taiga.

We are in it, even if we were born and live in cities.

Society is a "collective super-predator" in the global ecosystem.

And even in the "owners of the taiga," buying the taiga remotely via the internet, there is meaning. They have their place in the global ecosystem. In the emerging digital world, they give us the opportunity to ask ourselves about the acceptable limits of virtuality in the real world.

If the Russian Taiga is being auctioned off, can the house we live in be sold the same way?

Will we be sold along with the house to the new owner, or will we be evicted?

Will tokens for water and air be sold like that too?

For the record: I'm not joking or exaggerating at all!

Assigning digital value to natural resources is a completely real trend in the development of global financial instruments. Currently, the existing direction of tokenization involves CO2 emission quotas, which are traded on exchanges. Next in line are water, forests, and sunlight.

Tokenization involves issuing special crypto-assets (tokens) tied to the value of a specific natural resource. Right now, it's being presented to people as something for businesses, where those who don't want to be eco-friendly and conserve resources have to pay.

In reality, it's a new taxation mechanism. It's essentially the direct appropriation of natural rent by unknown entities. The beneficiaries of such tokenization of natural resources remain behind the scenes in the world of digital platforms, and taxation ultimately falls on the ordinary person. The average citizen will just live a little worse, while the invisible puppeteers of this global project will gain total power. It's no longer just called 'money'—it's not even 'power' in today's sense, but something more.

Chapter 21. How can we take from nature if everything around us feels pain?

Recent studies show that plants and trees feel pain and can transmit signals through mycorrhizal networks! They can communicate with each other. Scientists have also recorded the voices of plants, the sounds they make when you hurt them, break them, or eat them. I've published about this. Humans can't hear these sounds, but other plants, insects, and animals can.

So, the world we're so rapidly destroying is a complex living organism that we know almost nothing about! Not long ago, people said, "plants don't feel pain," trying to compare their pain sensations to our own feelings. But now scientists say: they do feel pain, very much so. It's just that plants are a completely different form of life, and their life processes, like their role in Earth's biosphere, differ from ours. Plants feel pain through electrical impulses!

So what does this mean?

Plants feel pain. They can communicate, send signals to each other. They experience horror and fear (recent scientific research). And these discoveries are only being made now: we're just beginning, like clumsy children, to understand the living world around us.

A world that's already been practically devoured by humans.

In our world, everything is created so that we live in a cycle of energy exchange! Every living being, whether animal, insect, or plant, gives and receives energy. One life gives rise to another.

Many plants produce fruits that spread through the stomachs of animals that consume them. They biologically conduct the cycle of their offspring's birth through energy exchange: offering animals the fruit to eat, in return spreading their seeds.

Biologically, tigers, wolves, and bears obtain their food through hunting. But they always perform certain functions set by nature. Wolves hunt weak or sick animals, thus removing bad genes from populations and keeping them healthy. In the biosphere, this is a complete analogy to the immune system of our own bodies: some cells carry vital substances, others fight diseases, and others form a strong immune system or

indicate the body's condition.

And animals in Earth's biosphere provide these functions, being indispensable and necessary in the wild. A wolf eats a deer—this is a necessary process laid down by nature! A deer eats grass, a hare gnaws on roots, a woodpecker extracts insects from under tree bark.

These are the processes that maintain the health of biological systems! These are processes laid down by Mother Nature, with crucial functions and boundaries that we must not cross.

INVASIVE SPECIES

In nature, there are invasive species. Healthy ecosystems, with the help of animals that are part of the immune system, identify and suppress alien species! They suppress diseases or other animals that shouldn't exist in a particular biological system.

But what can nature do if the biosphere is destroyed and ecological systems are stripped of immunity?

Humans have emerged as the most dangerous invasive species on the planet. People have enclosed themselves in concrete urban agglomerations and, sitting in them, venture into nature only to finally destroy its immune system.

A living example I constantly talk about: the extermination of wolves! On a global scale, everyone is collectively committing genocide against the wild's sanitation workers. In our country, wolves can be killed by any means, shooting pups, using torture devices, killing from helicopters. Meanwhile, authorities encourage the killings, paying bounties up to 50,000 rubles for each wolf killed. Shoot a pack of 6 wolves, get 300,000 rubles in cash and praise from society, from the state! Local newspapers will write, "Hero, saved people from evil wolves."

And so the immunity of the wild is finally destroyed. And, like a real disease, we can't give a sober assessment of what's happening.

Yes, there are people, nature defenders, who understand and can feel the Earth's pain! But are you sure this isn't an anomaly? That we aren't a defect of "humanity's disease"? A flaw and a breach in its sole purpose: to parasitize and destroy life.

I still sincerely believe that we are not a defect, but on the contrary—healthy cells capable of leading to the healing of the entire living organism of humanity. That it is with us that global changes can begin, awakening a connection with nature in people, and then, from a

disease, we will once again become part of the Earth's biosphere's immunity.

It's still possible to stop everything. Right now, we still have the chance! But we must act immediately, urgently, awakening people with all our might: every person counts, and everyone we manage to awaken becomes part of a healthy immunity.

The energy of life

Everything around us is alive. Everything feels pain, even if we don't understand it! Everything has its own energy. The question isn't whether to "eat or not eat," but rather not to destroy the Living world around us!

People write to me, "If plants are alive, how can we eat them?" I also hear, "Fish don't scream, so they don't feel pain! That's why I eat fish."

Well, our world is entirely alive! Everything around is endowed with nature-given feelings, sensations, its own magic: the magic to speak, the magic to love, the magic to be self-aware.

Just recently, I wrote that only this year scientists proved that bumblebees possess logical thinking! It's scientifically proven! And yet, logical thinking was until recently considered a key distinguishing feature of

human consciousness.

I think in the coming years there will be more such studies, more discoveries, and we will begin to understand the living world around us in a completely new way.

So what now, should we eat nothing to avoid causing pain?

Pain is an indicator that helps identify problems in populations, develop immunity, defend, and evolve. We feel pain in our own way, while plants, for example, feel it completely differently, as if they're literally shocked by it! This gift is bestowed upon all living things on Earth.

If a living organism is another form of life and doesn't resemble us, it doesn't mean that organism doesn't feel pain, doesn't have feelings, and doesn't want to live.

It's impossible to live without exchanging energy, just as it's impossible to take energy without giving something in return!

We, humans, must remember a simple rule: take from nature as needed, only as much as is truly necessary! And try to give back ten times more.

If the overwhelming majority of people on Earth start living by this rule, we will see global changes, the restoration of lost ecosystems, the revival of the Biosphere. We will begin to see the world around us with completely different eyes, with a different understanding, a true awareness.

In exchanging energy, give back to nature in return! If you've taken excessively, it means you've taken energy from those who needed it. If you haven't given back, it means you've deprived those who should have received it from you.

Wolves kill deer! Wolves heal the wild, keep populations strong, and prevent the spread of diseases. Wolves make other animal species strong genetically and physiologically.

Hunters, killing for sport, wipe out the strongest individuals, aiming to get the best trophy. And at the same time, they kill wolves, completely suppressing nature's immune system.

And they tell us, "Well, we're just like wolves, we kill deer too." They don't see the difference! They don't even come close to understanding how nature works and how important it is to maintain balance.

The wolf protects nature!

The bear maintains balance.

Every little bird, every insect, every animal is part of the unified rhythms of Life.

And what are you doing?

What is your role in these rhythms?

Think about it.

Chapter 22. What can each person do to protect nature?

I often get messages saying, “Talking about problems is fine, but what should we actually do?!” Our long-time supporters never write like this. Such questions usually come from casual readers who stumble upon our publications but lack the drive to really delve into the projects. What we do and why.

In reality, everyone defines their own horizon of possibilities. Some can share information, spread important materials, talk about issues, and keep public interest alive. Others get involved in different ways. I also carve my own path with the resources and strength I have.

Here I am—just one person.

I’m a writer—I write books and share my experiences with people, and all my books are free. I understand how crucial it is for everyone to have access to this knowledge, so I don’t turn this struggle into a business. I don’t run ads, lobby for business or government

interests, or engage in commerce. All my books are available to everyone for free and without restrictions.

I’m a researcher—I study environmental issues, scientific works, and combine all this, striving to carefully analyze and convey information to people. This takes a lot of time. I learn myself, exchange experiences with others. I developed a concept for changing the existing global reserve system, created a project, and unite people around a comprehensive plan to create Territories of Full Ecological Tranquility. Currently, I’m conducting expeditionary research, trying to determine the boundaries of future TFETs, gaining more field research experience. Before this, I spent over ten years on personal expeditions across Russia, from one end of our country to the other, studying and trying to solve environmental problems in practice.

I’m a public activist—when I encounter environmental problems and realize I can try to fight them, I develop a strategy of action. I created my own infrastructure, website, and public initiatives. I launch projects within my capabilities, attract people to the tasks at hand, and together we achieve their resolution. Some things work out, some don’t, but together with our people, we rise again and continue to act. This is our collective experience.

So what should be done to protect nature? And how do you respond to comments like, “Talking about problems is fine, but what should we actually do?” I don’t know. No idea. I can’t take responsibility for every adult, and I don’t have a “guaranteed formula for absolute nature protection.” No one in the world has such a formula today. I do what I can. And with me are countless people who help me and achieve real changes together. These heroes have already held back a huge number of dangerous bills and helped stop many environmental problems. They don’t ask to “solve everything for them,” but act as an integral part of our projects.

And what should those who don’t know what to do do—I don’t know either. And my fellow supporters don’t know. We’ve determined what we can handle. We don’t have the time or resources to do more. If we find such a formula tomorrow—we’ll definitely share it. But that will also just be our experience and our struggle. How others will use this experience—no one knows.

Every adult must determine for themselves what they can personally do to protect nature. How much time they’re willing to dedicate, what strength and resources to invest. No one intends to take responsibility for adults and lead them by the hand. My fellow supporters and I can only share our experience and offer to help push the

immense work we’re doing. And if that’s not enough—do more. Offer your ideas. Develop your own formula and show others how to change the world.

Chapter 23. Foreign shores: the Chinese empire

Or how the Chinese government committed genocide against 30 million Chinese using ecological weapons.

Let me tell you a story, friends. It's almost funny. It could pass for a "historical anecdote" if it weren't so sad. And if you look even deeper, it's a drama. One that makes you ponder the future. It raises serious questions.

In 1958, Soviet power was as strong as the armor of the legendary T-34 tank, both in the USSR and in China. And just as unyielding if it set its mind on accomplishing something. At that time, China was ruled by Emperor Mao. (I apologize, of course, not emperor: I get confused. Rulers always mislead with their modesty: "Tsar, just a tsar!" You inadvertently forget what the correct title is!) So, this esteemed Mao Zedong, on March 18, 1958, at the 8th Congress of the Communist Party of China, called for the complete eradication of the "enemies of the hardworking Chinese people."

In the list, alongside rats and flies, were sparrows. You might think sparrows made the list just because of their name. "Beat the thief!" They peck at grain—stealing, are they? So, "get them!" It seems so stupid. But I'm not sure; in Chinese, they might be called something else. And there was a "serious scientific basis" for these actions! The initiator was biologist Zhou Jian, who was then the Deputy Minister of Education. So, eternal glory to imperial science of all times and peoples! Hurrah—hurrah—hurrah! With such victorious cries, the entire Chinese nation rushed to destroy the birds. They tore apart nests, shot them, and handed out slingshots to children, awarding certificates to the most effective killers. Obviously, not only sparrows but all small birds were caught in the crossfire. At first, it didn't go well. But scientists helped, gave advice. Again, glory to imperial science! Small birds can't fly for long; they get tired. It was discovered that their limit is about 15 minutes. So the Chinese simply chased them, not letting them land. They banged on pots, blew horns, and waved flags in entire villages. You really had to see it. Words can't describe how they then crushed the exhausted creatures with their hands and hauled the bodies away in trucks! There are still many videos from those years on social media and YouTube.

In short, they couldn't handle the rats and flies. But they wiped out the birds completely. And the next year, China had an unprecedented grain harvest. Probably a coincidence. Because a year later, a terrible famine began. Pest insects, with no birds to eat them, multiplied and devoured all the crops. Between 10 and 30 million Chinese died from hunger, according to various estimates.

As usual, the 10 million estimate comes from the government. The 30 million and higher estimates are from independent organizations. (For context: the USSR's losses in World War II, both on the fronts and demographically, are now estimated at 25 to 27 million.) The government realized the problem. It's reported that they even bought birds in bulk for breeding from the USSR and Canada.

But who knows this 'enigmatic Chinese genius'? A different culture—it's a mystery. Especially one with hieroglyphs. Maybe the goal was to eliminate the 'riffraff'?! Even then, China was dealing with overpopulation. It's not too far-fetched to suggest that in 1958, China successfully tested ecological weapons to reduce the country's population. Why not? The idea that both the authorities and scientists were simply hopelessly stupid is no less unrealistic.

And, returning to our own shores. People still write to me: what kind of childish nonsense is Pavel Pashkov up to, putting up birdhouses? Unfortunately, some think it's something trivial. Look at the real, historical precedent! There's plenty of material online, including articles on Wikipedia! Even in Chinese, if you need it!

ECOLOGY IS SERIOUS! IT'S A SYSTEM! A LIVING ORGANISM! REMOVING ONE ELEMENT (!!!) LEADS TO UNPREDICTABLE CONSEQUENCES!

(P.S. By the way, does the conceptual framework of the Chinese language have an equivalent to the Russian concept of "conscience"? Or do they have something Confucian, like "public good," instead?)

At Stalin's 70th birthday celebration in the USSR, Comrade Mao Zedong was also present. A historic meeting of the leaders of China and the USSR, a historic agreement between the countries, and historic conversations between the "great comrades."

Stalin asked:

"Comrade Mao, according to some data, China has 500 million people, according to others, 550 million. What is the actual population of China?"

Mao Zedong replied:

"Yes, Comrade Stalin, according to some data, China has 500 million. But there are also figures that say 550 million. But these are Chinese people, who could really count the population of China? They only counted in central China. So, I think there could be twice as many people in China."

And Mao, in turn, asked Stalin:

"Why not send twenty million to the Soviet Union?"

Stalin calmly replied:

"I have my own two hundred million. That's enough."

I don't know if this is historically true or just a historical anecdote. But it makes you think, doesn't it? About the historical prospects for the future... What's the "ratio of sides" now? Less than 150 million to almost 1.5 billion?!

Chapter 24. Will Siberian rivers be diverted to China?

Think it's science fiction? No, my friends. Unfortunately, it's not fiction, but quite real news. A few years ago, the Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation proposed the idea of diverting 70 million cubic meters of water annually from the Altai region to China. For many years, China has been offering good investments in exchange for transferring water to the Middle Kingdom. The situation with fresh water there is catastrophic. After the attempt to build a plant for extracting fresh water from Baikal for China failed, they returned to the old option: redirecting Siberian rivers towards China and transferring water through Kazakhstan.

They're planning to divert water through Altai! This is my homeland, where I was born and raised. Altai is called the "cradle of the world" for its pristine nature and unique ecosystem. Any attempts to alter the "arteries" of rivers are like tearing a vein from the heart and redirecting it to the backside. Sure, the blood will flow, but the person won't live long! It's the same with

nature: YOU CANNOT CHANGE THE DIRECTION OF RIVERS.

I'll share a sad experience that was practiced in the Soviet Union and practically destroyed the Aral Sea. Since the 1960s, the government decided that to irrigate the land of Central Asia (back then it was still the USSR, and the republics were united), it was urgent to build irrigation canals. The Aral Sea was once the fourth largest in the world! Today, it's just salt, a desert floor, and poisoned land.

Collector-drainage waters flowing from the fields into the riverbeds have carried agricultural chemicals into the waters of the Aral Sea (or rather, what's left of it). Desert storms spread the toxic chemicals over distances exceeding 500 km, poisoning everything around. Moreover, in 2001, due to the drop in water levels, the "Rebirth" Island reconnected with the mainland, where there were laboratories for the development and testing of bacteriological weapons. Pathogens of anthrax, brucellosis, tularemia, plague, typhus, and more. There is now a real danger that microorganisms deadly to humanity have survived in the soil on the island. Infected rodents could easily spread all this across Central Asia, and stopping the consequences would be extremely difficult.

Not only are Russia's forests being destroyed on a massive scale, but in the Far East and Siberia, Chinese "farmers" are scorching the land with powerful chemicals to grow agricultural products... and Russia is overwhelmed with protests against the garbage crisis. On top of that, the government is coming up with ideas like "let's completely destroy the country's ecosystem." Our country's environmental situation is truly terrible. Just look around! The worst that humanity could do is already at our nation's doorstep.

In China, water problems will intensify every year, and our authorities, for the sake of "foreign investments," will be ready to do anything. Even sell Baikal and divert rivers. There isn't detailed information yet; the project is at the "consideration" stage, and opinions are divided. The Chinese company AQUASIB is still fighting for a plant on the shores of Baikal to extract fresh water. They've got a death grip on it. Today, they literally sent material about the situation directly from the region to my email! We're waiting for news. No information yet.

Chapter 25. I'm against hunting in the modern world

Someone asked me, “Pavel, what’s your stance on hunting?” And it was hunters themselves asking. Let me answer publicly, because it’s truly an important question.

I AM AGAINST HUNTING IN THE MODERN WORLD. Completely. Totally. Is there any point? Yes, our ancestors hunted wild animals for food. But today, hunting is nothing more than killing for entertainment. Ducks are killed by the dozens at a time, bears are shot while they sleep in their dens, wolves are slaughtered and then proudly displayed in photos, like “Look, we’re heroes, we shot the gray one in the head.” There’s no honor in this, and no truth either.

They use thermal scopes. Driving through the taiga in SUVs! I see no point in hunting today, other than the desire to kill. Just taking the life of a wild animal that’s already on the brink of extinction. We’re constantly lied to, told there are still plenty of animals (see the previous

article), but in reality, the last of the animals are barely surviving in the age of humans. In the last 50 years, we've wiped out 60% of all animals on the planet! This is not normal.

I've traveled all over Russia and it's the same everywhere: wherever there's a patch of forest, there's always a banner saying "Hunting only with permits!" Instead of giving wild animals a chance to live and increase their population, they're being BRED for future slaughter. For business, simply put! People get the chance to kill, and hunting enterprises get pure profit. Nothing personal, as they say.

Money. Just money. That's why I'm against hunting. To me, the taiga is the temple of my Gods, and I find more there than anywhere else. It hurts to see it being violated from all sides: trees cut down, patches of living forest turned into hunting grounds. If it weren't for the hunting enterprises breeding wild animals for slaughter, I fear we'd have no wild animals left at all…

In Russia, there are government agencies that deal with hunting and game management. There are also statistics. Official ones. There aren't any unofficial ones: it's too complicated to account for. Except for opinions and estimates from individual experts. And the statistics

say that the number of animals and birds in the Russian Taiga is not just not decreasing, but is slowly growing. The number of "game," meaning animals and birds as hunting targets. This is encouraging! Well, it should be encouraging—the number of animals and birds is some indicator of the health of the Russian Taiga. A living, healthy taiga means its population is increasing, with food to eat and places to live.

The first and main question: how objective is such optimistic statistics?

I quote from FGUP "Centrohotkontrol," the document "The State of Hunting Resources in the Russian Federation in 2008–2013."

> "According to state monitoring data from 2012–2013, the otter population in Russia was over 100,000 individuals. Compared to the long-term average, the otter population 'increased' by more than 20,000 individuals. This sharp increase in the number of this species is due to inaccurate information sent to the authorized body of the Tomsk region by a hunting user who reported an excessively inflated number. Without considering these erroneous data, the otter population in Russia remains stable at 80,000–85,000 individuals."

> "According to state monitoring data, the total wolf population in Russia was estimated at 44,400 individuals in 2013, which is more than 13,000 fewer than the previous year's figure. The decrease in the wolf population occurred primarily due to the adjustment made in 2013 by the authorized body of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) in relation to the 2012 estimate, where the population was corrected from 10,700 individuals to 2,600 individuals."

In two regions, the data turned out to be lies! They "increased" the otter population by 20% and the wolf population by 25%!

It is good that the government agency itself is investigating and acknowledging that it has been given inflated population estimates. What is bad is what this says about the general approach in the country's government agencies. What happened in these cases? I suspect that the central office noticed the implausibly inflated animal counts. As if to say: do you really take us for idiots? How did you end up with 10,000 animals when last year you didn't even have a thousand?

Did they bring them from America, or did they fall from the moon?! Those who don't inflate the numbers in pursuit of good reports and bonuses are simply ignored.

So, the population of animals and birds in the Russian Taiga "grows"... according to the statistics! But the local people, the elders, say, "There are fewer animals in the taiga now!" Does their personal opinion mean anything against the state statistics?!

All I can say is this: I trust the village elders more than the officials in their offices. Unfortunately...

The second question: it's not just about the numbers.

Since the end of the last century, around the 1990s, the nature of the animal and bird populations in the Russian Taiga has changed. The number of hunting bases and hunting enterprises has sharply increased. And it continues to grow. The commercial sector of sport hunting. From a situation where such commercial activity was practically nonexistent to a significant, quite "lucrative," market segment. Of course, the income here isn't like that of industrial logging. But it's still quite high.

And some animals are bred and raised artificially. So, they're not exactly "wild" animals anymore. Kind of like the ducks in Moscow's ponds or the squirrels in Moscow's parks. They aren't afraid of people and are fed by them. Although they seem to live freely, they've become quite "humanized." An important detail is that

they are included in reports, but they live on the grounds of specific hunting estates. They're not fully integrated into the natural environment.

Overall, breeding, even if it's for hunting, is generally a positive thing. Sort of...

But I can't help but mention the following. In the modern world, such "sport hunting" is increasingly becoming "sport killing" in its purest form. Gamekeepers separate, for example, a bull from the herd and drive it toward the hunter for an easy shot. The only difference is that it's not the familiar "cow from Prostokvashino," but a moose or a noble deer. There's no tracking of a real wild animal involved. There's long been no need for the hide or meat. Only the desire to kill remains. This modern "hunter" satisfies only their own passion for killing.

In the end, the picture isn't as rosy as it looks "on paper." You can only trust official statistics with a lo-o-ot of caution! Even the structure of higher organisms in the Russian Taiga is ambiguous. The breeding of several species convenient for hunting is even funded. Not only in private hunting farms purely focused on profit, but in state ones too.

No one really bothers with researching "non-commercial" species. And the question of studying the connections between living organisms in a specific section of the taiga, or examining the system of the forest as a living organism, isn't even raised! They pay for killing, but not for studying life. It's a good thing we at least have nature reserves. There are just too few of these areas, and even fewer studies...

My thoughts on Russian hunting regularly cause confusion among a wide range of people. Some even feel indignant. I haven't touched on this topic before, and I don't claim to have the ultimate truth. These are just reflections. Who is the hunter in the modern world? And how has Russian hunting changed, along with the hunter himself? Everything we say and do to preserve the Russian Taiga is not really about the taiga. It's all about us, the people. About our connection with the forest, which still exists today.

Although many people don't realize this at all. A simple example: the air we all breathe. Even if you live in the very center of a huge city and don't think about it, the taiga produces the air you breathe. It absorbs dust and carbon dioxide like a sponge, releasing life-giving oxygen. And this exchange happens on a planetary scale, filling cities with breathable air. For now, it does.

Scientists' predictions on this matter are not straightforward. Some are very grim, considering the increasing rates of industrial consumption and deforestation.

The issue of hunting and hunters is secondary. But it's telling when it comes to, let's say, human psychology. The relationship between people and the forest. A personal relationship. In ancient times, people didn't separate themselves from the forest. And hunters were respected. Only the best, the strongest, could engage in such a trade. How else? Hunting was almost on equal terms. With a spear, a bow and arrows, or a crossbow. The risk was no joke. From dawn to dusk in the taiga, you needed to know the habits of the animals, track them. A hunter needed a lot of intelligence, cunning, and ingenuity.

Times changed, and gun hunters appeared. And a division occurred. Besides the hunter-trapper, for whom hunting was a trade, a way to provide for their life, there were also sports hunters. Sport hunting, not for skins or meat, didn't appear yesterday. It has a long history. Several centuries. In our lands, the Russian Taiga, it was the tsars and boyars who were the first. And the practice of reserves started from those times.

The first nature reserves were actually hunting preserves in the modern sense. Game was protected for the tsar and the boyars. But for the common person to venture there—no way! Then came the landowners. Hunting was a fashionable pastime, recognized by society. The most vivid literary example is Sergey Timofeevich Aksakov's "Notes of a Rifle Hunter from the Orenburg Province." These are true notes of a naturalist, an observant eye catching the smallest details. A person who truly loves nature.

In the modern world, the hunter as a tradesman is a relic. They still exist, but very few. No more than cobblers who hammer nails into shoe soles by hand, for example. And, in my opinion, there are just as few sports hunters in the sense of past centuries, with landlords and balls. Those who know and love their native forests. Those for whom understanding the surrounding world is important. Those for whom the process of tracking prey is more interesting and important than just the kill.

I see a lot of some modernized version of "royal hunting." Wealthy people come to the taiga. Their hunts are organized for them. Often with technology, ATVs, jeeps—even hunting from helicopters. These people don't know the taiga; what's important is to kill a beast that's more impressive. A boar with bigger tusks or a

deer with larger antlers. A trophy! That's often what they call it—trophy hunting. Such hunters simply despise the taiga, the animals, and even the surrounding people from "lower classes."

The gamekeepers, by the way, often respond in kind. They understand that such "hunters" are incapable of tracking animals themselves. They laugh at them. Killing for the sake of killing and confirming the "social status of the killer." And, apparently, in the modern world, these kinds of hunters are already the majority. It makes you wonder: should society even indulge such psychopathic tendencies, essentially, of individuals with power and money?

Chapter 26. Krasnoyarsk Krai: from forest banditry to the shooting of bears — who benefits?

I want to draw our fellow supporters' attention to this fact: we're being told about the "excessively growing population" of bears. Yet, back in 2021, it was claimed that the bear population was around 300,000 individuals, just four years after law enforcement agencies provided completely opposite information—there were about 143,000 bears, and they required federal protection. I haven't found any evidence that a large animal like the bear, with a slow life cycle, can double its population in such a short period, especially across a vast country with completely different climate zones.

Is it even necessary to remind you that we have no truly objective count of wild animals? Most often, estimates are based on the words of those directly interested—like hunting users (hunting grounds). Additionally, the supposed numbers on paper are determined by how

often animals are seen. Essentially, this is the main psychological measure: if people see animals more frequently, it seems there must be significantly more of them.

Meanwhile, the catastrophic deforestation in Russia, which drives animals toward human settlements, is being ignored. Abnormal forest fires are also overlooked, and let me remind you that in recent years, millions of hectares have burned to the ground. Additionally, no one talks about the sale of a third of all publicly accessible forest lands in the country to private hands for sport hunting—meaning people are putting pressure on wildlife by paying to shoot at "live targets." Moreover, in hunting grounds, if they aren't actively selling licenses to shoot predators, wolves, bears, and tigers are seen as direct competitors in hunting. I've heard repeatedly from the gamekeepers who currently work in these hunting areas that when land is leased for animal shooting, they usually go through the territories and deliberately clear them of large predators. This is done to "ensure the safety of clients" who later want to shoot, say, boars or moose, and then there's a bear. Conflict. Who needs that? Naturally, no one, so the areas are cleared in advance.

How this works in practice and on what scale—I don't know. But the issue definitely requires investigation. However, I do know for sure that the pressure on wildlife is already enormous, and that's precisely why we see animals more frequently near populated areas. It's not because their numbers have "suddenly exploded and they can't fit in the wild."

Let's conduct a small mini-study of the problem together.

Since it's us who are gathering data from the regions to create a registry of bear extermination, we have the opportunity to rely on our own results moving forward.

So, we have regions with the sharpest increase in bear hunting quotas. Let's take one of them as a basis for researching the issue—let's say Krasnoyarsk Krai.

Let's pose an objective question: Is there an abnormal increase in forest fires and logging in this region, and is there pressure on wildlife from the systemic apparatus? I understand that any data will be approximate and almost certainly understated by officials. I also understand that after the ban on many environmental organizations in the country, there is a lack of data, and independent analysis even more so. But there is earlier

data, say, from around 2019/2020 and beyond, precisely when there was a massive sell-off of the Russian Taiga for sports and recreational hunting grounds.

I think for a mini-study with fellow supporters, analyzing one major region where there's been a sharp increase in bear hunting quotas will suffice. Logically, if regions are experiencing pressure on ecosystems and the destruction of biogeocenoses, animals will start approaching humans. If there are too many predators, it will cause scandals, and people will start asking uncomfortable questions! Therefore, increasing quotas will definitely allow for the culling of animals before they reach humans.

Krasnoyarsk Krai. According to our registry, the bear harvest limit developed as follows:

- 2019/2020 — 1,567 individuals
- 2020/2021 — 1,942 individuals
- 2021/2022 — 3,145 individuals
- 2022/2023 — data not found (we didn't find the specific decree, but bear hunting continued)
- 2023/2024 — 4,779 individuals
- 2024/2025 — 4,565 individuals

- 2025/2026 — 4,616 individuals
- 2026/2027 — 5,037 individuals

So what do we get?

Let's do a simple calculation: 1,567 + 1,942 + 3,145 + 4,779 + 4,565 + 4,616 + 5,037 = 25,651 bears.

To simplify: over seven hunting seasons in just the Krasnoyarsk region, permits were issued to shoot 25,651 bears. A total of eight hunting seasons were considered (data for one season is missing). How many were actually killed is unknown; we only know the number of quotas issued by officials. In other words, how many they allowed to be killed.

Now let's analyze the pressure on the environment of the Krasnoyarsk region. What preceded the increase in the mass shooting of bears in the area?

In 2019, we recorded abnormal, catastrophic, and destructive wildfires in Siberia. A huge number of these fires were concentrated in the Krasnoyarsk region. Our regular supporters will surely remember how the then-governor Alexander Uss stated:

> "If we have cold weather and a blizzard in winter, no one thinks of melting icebergs to make it warmer. I think something similar applies to wildfires in the control zone. It's not just about the government; it's that this is a natural phenomenon, fighting which is pointless and maybe even harmful in some ways."

This caused a stir, especially since he made this statement in the summer of 2019, during the peak of the most intense forest fires. Independent analysis at the time showed that the fires often started at logging sites and the forest roads leading to them, which were cluttered with deadwood. These spots were typically where "hunting users" would stop to rest, light a campfire, have some vodka, and then move on. And then the embers would spread the fire, leading to abnormal wildfires!

For those who remember, in 2019, the Krasnoyarsk region was catastrophically ablaze. Smoke covered cities and villages, affecting both people and wildlife. Officials, including the governor personally, cited "economic impracticality" as the reason for their inaction.

I recently published a new extensive piece on scientific data regarding the destruction of forests in Siberia and the Far East over the past 25 years. According to

research, just since 2001, and only in the studied regions of Siberia, nature has been sliced into pieces by more than 100,000 kilometers of roads.

So, do you get what I'm saying? The nature of Siberia has been riddled with fragments and isolated from each other. Following this, Russian scientists conducted a study in the Angara region, where they proved that up to half of all fires start precisely at logging sites and within two kilometers of roads.

It's actually quite simple: people push deeper into the wilderness, and road construction allows them to go further and further. And where there are people, there are fires from untended campfires and discarded cigarette butts. In clear-cut areas, groups of hunters or logging workers often rest, smoke, light fires, and then leave, leading to fires.

Be sure to check out the detailed material here: https://pavel-pashkov.com/articles/ru/destroyed-ancient-forests-siberia

So, in our mini-study, we're already compiling data on the devastating forest fires in the Krasnoyarsk region in 2019: it was from this time that there was a sharp increase in the issuance of quotas for bear hunting, as they had at least lost their habitat and food sources due

to the fires and began approaching humans in search of food.

But what else happened here?

The next layer we add is forest crime and corruption. In the following year, 2020, the former Minister of Forestry of the Krasnoyarsk region, Dmitry Maslodurov, was arrested on charges of receiving multimillion-dollar bribes from the logging company Kraslestorg.

Simultaneously, a scandal emerged around the "Church of the Last Testament": you probably remember how the media reported on the arrest on September 22, 2020, of the leaders of this organization in the Kuraginsky district of the Krasnoyarsk region: Sergey Torop, known as Vissarion, Vadim Redkin, and Vladimir Vedernikov. The investigation accused them of creating a religious group whose activities involved violence and causing serious harm to the health of two or more people.

But what was left out of the spotlight was this: on September 23, 2020, "Kommersant" reported that the investigation was examining the Church's contacts with the Krasnoyarsk region authorities. It was said that they received tens of millions of rubles from illegal logging and the construction of luxury homes from this wood,

where, it was claimed, regional officials lived.

It later became known about the organization's connection with that very Minister of Forestry who was detained. They were primarily cutting down cedars—the center of interspecies communication, invaluable forests that provide a food base for wild animals and form entire ecosystems. According to the investigation, a significant source of funding for TFET was timber harvesting, especially cedar, and house construction. "Kommersant" reported that at least two individual entrepreneurs under the control of people from this circle were involved in buying up forests, as well as dozens, if not hundreds, of private individuals who, according to the investigation, were engaged in logging without registration.





These individual entrepreneurs, as the publication wrote, periodically won tenders announced by the authorities. One of them was building facilities for the 2019 Universiade in Krasnoyarsk—stages, log cabins, gazebos. It was also reported that one of the TFET co-founders headed a company that built premium-class baths and country houses costing from 10 million rubles.

So what do we have here? The FORMER Minister of Forestry personally took part in the destruction of the Russian Taiga. This also involved dozens, if not hundreds, of regional officials. Their interests were

served by obscure organizations, shady individual entrepreneurs, and so on. They cut down mother trees, which are the foundation of life in the local forests. Meanwhile, there were also catastrophic, destructive forest fires.

And then again, destructive forest fires: already on May 7–8, 2022, in the Krasnoyarsk region, fires affected 60 settlements, destroying or damaging 518 residential houses, 309 other structures, and 61 vehicles. According to various updates, 7 to 8 people died; 19 to 20 were injured. Earlier reports mentioned 5 deaths, then the number grew.

In fact, we can confirm with you that at a time when quotas for shooting bears are sharply increasing, there is a SYSTEMATIC destruction of the Russian Taiga in the region, forest banditry involving top regional officials, and catastrophic forest fires. The governor says there's no need to extinguish them and that "it's even harmful," apparently for the economy, while officials collectively plunder the long-suffering taiga.

Now, in our mini-study, let's draw another parallel—the development of the industry of paid wild animal killings.

We pose the question: we know about the sharp increase in quotas for shooting bears, which goes hand in hand with catastrophic fires and forest banditry. At the same time, we know that officials are plundering the Russian Taiga (officially confirmed), personally involving the former minister of forestry, while the then-governor stated that extinguishing forest fires was "harmful." Was there also an increase in the scale of wild animal shootings at this time?

Our key point is December 31, 2019: by decree of that very governor Uss No. 362-ug, the "Scheme for the placement, use, and protection of hunting grounds in the Krasnoyarsk region" was approved. That is, AFTER the scandal with the abnormal forest fires, he personally ordered the start of massive development of the hunting industry in the region.

Once again, the connection: abnormal forest fires, the scandal with his statement, then the decree to increase wild animal shootings. And let's recall my earlier words about how early shooting of animals BEFORE they approach people allows avoiding inconvenient questions

from citizens later.

The development of the hunting industry has become colossal: by 2025, the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Krasnoyarsk Territory published data showing that 218.3 million hectares have already been allocated for hunting grounds. As of April 1, 2025, 80.5 million hectares are designated hunting grounds, and 137.9 million hectares are public hunting grounds. These are gigantic territories, and the designated ones, as understood, are handed over to private hands.

- Private hunting grounds 80.5 million
- Publicly accessible 137.9 million

The authorities called hunting a "traditional form of nature use" that "contributes to the development of entrepreneurship." So, a course was immediately and firmly set that this is for profit.

I found data that as of 2025, there were 130.2 thousand registered hunters in the region. Meanwhile, NEW hunters are arriving annually at a rate of 3.5–4 thousand people (receiving hunting licenses). Also, annually, about 60 thousand hunters receive permission to shoot animals in public forest areas. The rest apparently go to shoot live targets in private grounds.

The data is provided by the region's Ministry of Natural Resources itself. Interestingly, in the same material, the authorities admit that many hunting operators have a low level of organization and management of hunting grounds. The reasons cited include low profitability, some operators turning to other sources of income, and "incompetent management" unable to organize the hunting business even in economically favorable regions.

In other words, officials handed over vast territories of the Russian Taiga in the Krasnoyarsk region for the slaughter of animals, knowing full well that there is a completely ineffective "leaky" management system in place. This is what you call a mess!

Even more important: according to the Ministry of Natural Resources, the actual protection of hunting grounds is carried out by 63 state hunting inspectors. Each inspector is responsible for up to 1.6 million hectares of controlled territory, and in the northern areas—up to 6.9 million hectares.

According to state monitoring of hunting resources, as of April 1, 2026, the population of brown bears in the hunting grounds of the Krasnoyarsk Territory was estimated at approximately 26,600 individuals. A year

earlier, on April 1, 2025, the figure was about 25,300 individuals. Thus, the official population estimate increased by approximately 5%.

But let me remind you that we have no reliable data on the bear population at all. In fact, even the leadership of the Rosrybolovokhota association recently stated this, despite their demands to legalize unlimited bear hunting and allow them to be killed during winter hibernation.

> No one knows the exact numbers. There are no methods to count every single bear in the forest. Our numbers are just subjective estimates, nothing more. Nevertheless, the number of conflicts makes it clear that something needs to be done about the bears.

So trusting official statistics is pointless.

What's next for us in the Krasnoyarsk region? It turns out that the annual quotas for bear hunting are increasing, and starting in 2024, the region introduced a mechanism where a hunter who kills a wolf or bear in public lands gets an additional advantage in the allocation of permits for hunting hoofed animals. The system works like this: 40% of the permits for hunting hoofed animals are distributed among hunters who have killed a wolf or bear or participated in activities for

accounting, regulating numbers, and conserving resources, while 60% go to other hunters.

Thus, the authorities are encouraging the killing of as many bears and wolves as possible. Meanwhile, they claim that the increase in quotas is due to population growth and that "they don't fit in the taiga." And the issues of ecosystem fragmentation, the destruction of ancient natural forests, are completely ignored.

Aren't we witnessing the large-scale destruction of the Krasnoyarsk region's forests, while the taiga is surrounded by hunting grounds as a buffer zone, and there's an intense shooting of animals that, having lost their habitat and food sources, are trying to approach humans in search of sustenance?

Chapter 27. Respect for nature is instilled in childhood

I constantly ask myself, what can one person do in the vastness of these majestic forests? Am I on the right path? In many ways, I undoubtedly lack experience, and at times, confidence. But today, I found the answer to my question. A person can begin to respect nature. Respect is the first true guide toward saving the forests. Nowadays, people's attitude toward nature is purely utilitarian.

It's like considering oneself a slave owner, with nature as the slave. All those dumps in the forests, the barbaric logging for money, or even on a smaller scale: destroying an anthill, leaving a campfire burning, mutilating a tree by throwing a knife at it—all of this is a degrading, exploitative attitude toward nature. Essentially, it's an attempt to assert oneself: I'm the boss. For monopolists, nature is just a source of income. Nothing more than raw material. But all people who show ignorance toward nature share one thing: a lack of respect.

And that's a shame. Nature is a complex organism. Every tree lives, breathes, and grows. Every anthill is a whole metropolis of living creatures. Everything we see in the forests is nature, which over millions of years, undoubtedly deserves respect. And humans are no exception. On the contrary, humans, as rational beings, are obliged to show the greatest respect and care for nature.

A man gives up his seat to a woman on public transport: that's a sign of respect. A woman says thank you in response: that's respect too. Respect is the fruit of proper upbringing in childhood. If today we start showing respect for nature, approaching the forests with care and responsibility—reminding ourselves mentally each time: "Nature deserves respect"—then our children, as they grow up, will remember this. The right rhythm in society is set once but continues to live on for a long time. Our task, the task of society, is to fundamentally change our attitude toward nature, learn to respect it, and raise our children correctly.

This was the case during Soviet times. Especially in the post-war years, there was very effective propaganda: a healthy lifestyle, rebuilding the Motherland, and loving nature. Both factory engineers and forest rangers in the taiga were held in high esteem. I am currently

engrossed in materials from those years, when large-scale reforestation efforts were underway, when youth were involved in planting forests, and you know what? It fills me with pride for our Soviet ancestors. Rereading the articles, I understand that respect for nature was truly developed. This was achieved through effective propaganda. Propaganda for the benefit of the country, the people, and nature!

Let's start showing respect for nature today. It's within our power! And maybe tomorrow everything will change. The mindset of the majority will fundamentally shift, people will take a step toward nature, and the forests will have a chance to thrive.

Our times are tough. Not in the sense that there's a war somewhere or the latest U.S. sanctions. It's about family! A real, bright, and big family, which few people value these days. I want to return to the roots of Rus, to our distant ancestors, for whom family was not just a guarantee of unity but also of great happiness. Family is, above all, a hearth, traditions, and a guarantee of a proper future, where family members stand up for each other, protect, and help the younger generation enter the world of adulthood and responsibility correctly. And the bigger the family, the stronger it is, essentially being a small society within the big world of similar families.

In the modern world, I increasingly hear people say things like, "I don't want to get married, why do I even need it!" and families are small, not strong at all. Traveling through the regions of today's Russia, especially touching on villages and small towns, it's painful to see young mothers struggling to raise children all alone, I would say, with their last ounce of strength. This is primarily due to people's mindset: while girls dream of "getting married," enchanted by romantic books, men are more interested in just a sexual relationship.

Young people swear love to get what they want, and each is right in their own way, as this, of course, comes from nature. Nature tells girls it's time to become mothers, and men to continue the lineage and take on the important mission of fatherhood! In this case, nature does its job fully, but modern couples don't want to think correctly and take responsibility for the family. Girls have children, and men go looking for free-spirited girls who aren't yet burdened with children and the worries of raising them.

Across the regions of Russia, I believe the issue of fatherlessness is extremely widespread and significantly impacts our society. Families where the man stays and tries to raise the child usually remain small and very

fragile! The head of the family himself becomes cautious and fears that his wife might have another child.

It's often the case that when a man stays, his wife gives him two more little kids! And that's when the worst happens: leaving her alone, he packs his things under the guise of work or other obligations—and just leaves. This is a problem! While this situation is less common in big cities, in rural areas, villages, and settlements, it's a real catastrophic issue and extremely dangerous for our Motherland.

Men, my main message is to you! We are strong and much tougher in spirit than our women. Nature has given them an incredibly challenging role: by becoming a mother, a woman becomes a guardian angel for our children, who must grow up, gain experience, and develop the right worldview! Our kids are the ones who can change everything one day.

Maybe the wrong era will pass, and a new generation will once again value family, ancestral settlements will be revived, and large happy families will gather around the fireplace to talk, immerse themselves in love, joy, and sincerity. But this won't happen until we take responsibility for our beloved wives and children. Abandoning your family is like betraying your Motherland! Because we are the Motherland! Those who

leave their children deprive the young generation of the right mindset, and the chance that our children will do the same when they grow up is very high. We are responsible for the family, for society, and for our Motherland!

Chapter 28. The New Year's tree

DO YOU NEED A TREE FOR NEW YEAR'S?

The radical approach is not to cut or buy live trees for the New Year celebrations. If you're going to have a tree, make it artificial. At the very least, it's not so straightforward. From an ecological standpoint, a plastic tree involves harmful production and materials that are difficult to decompose. I don't believe in the 'harmlessness' of plastics certified for use.

Because a new plastic tree noticeably smells like plastic. On the other hand, the trees sold at Christmas markets, at least a significant portion, come from special plantations in forestry enterprises. That means they're renewable, grown by people. So, I can't definitively say what's good and what's bad. I'll just share what I do. And a bit about the tradition of the New Year's Tree in general.

Whatever option you choose, remember: THE CELEBRATION IS NECESSARY!

I don't put up a tree at all. Every year, in December, I cut spruce or fir branches in the forest. If it's still a while until the holiday, they can easily stay in the cold for a week or two. No harm to the forest. These are branches from windfall or lower ones that are drying out anyway. And at home, as soon as they hit the warmth, there's the magical New Year scent: pine needles and tangerines. Not the plastic smell of an artificial tree.

And in the heart of winter, not necessarily on December 31st, I make a pilgrimage to the forest. I walk, talk to the trees. I find the oldest, largest tree. Why? Why do people go to temples, to churches? That's how it is for me: the Russian Taiga is my faith, my object of worship. This pilgrimage reminds me of who I am. Where my lineage began. What my ancestors lived by. It's important. Otherwise, in the hustle and bustle, in some senseless social movements, important, global things start to be forgotten.

This is not a recommendation. Just my experience, my attitude toward the issue. I think the most important thing is for a person to choose for themselves. To understand what and why they are doing.

And now a little excursion into the history of the New Year's Tree.

Not everything I tell you will be ordinary. The Christmas (New Year’s, Yuletide) tree is a European tradition. It’s associated with the medieval Germanic tradition. In Russia, it only took root in the 19th century! Of course, it didn’t take root in a vacuum. The symbol of the World Tree is common to all ancient cultures. This Tree has its roots in the Lower world, its trunk in our world, the world of humans, and its branches reach into the Higher world, connecting us with the gods. Winter celebrations are linked to the winter solstice. It’s simple: the longest night and the shortest day. From then on, the days get longer, everything moves toward warmth and summer, a new year is born.

Our distant ancestors, if anything, lived in the forest. They didn't need to cut down a tree and drag it home. They celebrated all the holidays right in the forest. Often there was one mighty and ancient Tree—a guardian of the clan near the settlement. There they welcomed spring and praised autumn. There they bid farewell to the old year with hopes for the future year. Among the Slavs, such revered trees were oaks. Birches and willows were revered as ceremonial, but somewhat differently.

According to my data, for the first settlers of Siberia, the main tree that replaced the oak was the cedar. The Siberian pine. I'm not entirely sure, but it seems that in the north of European Russia, pines were revered. The tradition of the World Tree is common, but depending on the conditions, different peoples revered different trees. In Svaneti, a birch was usually set up in the house for New Year. In ancient Greece, they revered the cypress. In Christianity, which came to us, they used... a palm! Willow and spruce for ceremonial purposes are already layers of local traditions!

And now about the Slavic tradition of saying goodbye to the old year and welcoming the new one. Here will be something you might not have known. The spruce among the Slavs is a tree associated with funeral and memorial rituals! It's the 'tree of the dead.' Echoes of those rituals have been preserved in the scattering of spruce branches along the path of the memorial procession and in wreaths of spruce twigs on graves. I'll also share a saying: 'Pray in a pine forest, but hang yourself in a spruce forest.'

I apologize for the somewhat grim associations in the pre-New Year material, but that's how it is. And spruce branches were indeed brought into the house before the new year: they were seeing off the past, 'dead,' year!

Then, on the night of the solstice, they went to the Ancestral Tree, scattering spruce twigs along the way. They lit a bonfire near the Tree—the guardian—and celebrated, welcoming the new year. They made wishes, asked for luck. And each took one charred stick from this bonfire home. They kept it until the next year: it was considered to bring good luck.

I'll say it again: A CELEBRATION IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. No matter how you choose to celebrate it, this is a day for uniting your entire family, your kin. It's essential to gather together and see off the old year. There was great meaning in the tradition of our distant ancestors. They "buried" the old year along with all its difficulties and problems. Everything is in the past, let's live for the future and be joyful! The New Year is coming.

Chapter 29. Releasing birds into the wild

Do you remember Pushkin's poem: In a foreign land, I observe with reverence, The native custom of old; I release a bird into freedom, On the bright holiday of spring. I became open to consolation: Why should I complain to God, When to at least one creature I could give freedom! (A. S. Pushkin. 1823)

The custom that Pushkin mentions in his poems survived among the people until the 21st century. In some villages, they still remember it! It was associated with spring festivals. In some parts of Russia, birds were released on Easter, while in others, it was on the Annunciation. Dal includes the saying: "Annunciation — the release of birds into freedom."

In the book "The Life of the Russian People" by ethnographer Alexander Vlasevich Tereshchenko, I found the following about the custom of releasing birds from captivity: "In St. Petersburg, there is a touching custom that, as they say, also exists in many places in

Russia. During Passion Week and the week of Bright Resurrection, birds are carried around in cages: larks, tits, pipits, and they are sold with the condition of release. A charitable and at the same time moving idea—both for those who catch them for sale for release, and for those who buy them to free them from captivity. ...I know many examples of Russian girls pooling their money to buy several cages and release the birds into the wild. What joy there must be for the liberators!"

Touching, of course... But what stupidity, don't you think?! Catching birds just to release them later! For bird catchers and traders, it's all clear. In the spirit of a thoroughly modern capitalist society: just business, nothing personal. It doesn't matter how many birds are crippled during capture, how many die in cages before they can be freed. The main thing is the profit.

But among ordinary people, the buyers, this custom must have existed earlier, as a tradition. Traders couldn't have invented it just to make money! They only used it. And this tradition isn't Christian, but much older. The connection between the release of birds and various dates (and different Christian holidays) in various regions speaks convincingly to this. All ancient customs are known not only to one people but to many, or at least several, peoples.

In some memories, customs are preserved better; in others, worse. Among some peoples, the oldest explanations of the custom have been preserved, while others have more recent ones. The custom of releasing birds from cages is known to all Slavic peoples—Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians. An old folk explanation of this custom states that the birds released into freedom intercede with God on behalf of the person who set them free.

Is this the ancient meaning behind the custom of releasing birds in the spring? Or is there something more?

Note: the ancient Russian custom is completely unrelated to hunting. Russians traditionally released forest songbirds into the wild during spring festivals. In old Moscow, at the Okhotny Ryad, forest birds were sold at the Bird Market as singing house pets. The custom of keeping forest songbirds in cages at home was long widespread among Russians as a household tradition, and this is what helped preserve the ancient custom.

The Ukrainian ethnographer Pyotr Vasilyevich Ivanov wrote in 1907 that Ukrainians living in Kupyansk during the Annunciation "release songbirds from their cages: siskins, bullfinches, goldfinches, and tits, into the wild so

that they may bless God and ask for happiness for the one who freed them from captivity." Again we encounter: "songbirds."

In my wanderings through the Russian Taiga, I still occasionally come across remnants of various ancient customs. In distant villages, kids still catch birds, keep them at home through the winter, and release them in the spring. And there are explanations for this, especially among the descendants of the Russian old-timers of Siberia.

In the extreme cold, the silence in the taiga is something special. A dead silence. It freezes over in clear weather, when even the wind dies down. Not a breath, not even the slightest movement of air. Only the intensifying frost, killing all living things. Only the crack of breaking branches sometimes, and the deathly silence. Among the peoples of the North, including the Russian North and their descendants who settled the Siberian Taiga, the concepts of death and the demise of all living things are associated with the cold. It closely echoes Ragnarok among the Northern Europeans.

The singing of birds was valued and stood against the deadly silence. People kept songbirds in their homes all through the harsh winter to drive away the cold from the

Family. And in spring, with gratitude, they released them.

Just like that...

And when spring comes, the birds with their singing will completely drive away the cold and winter!

Chapter 30. The forest guard

The specialized Forest Guard is first documented in our country in the Establishment of the Forest Department in 1798. That was 220 years ago.

And so it turns out, sir, you can't do without a guard, sir—they'll cart everything off...

It's sad, of course. But it's even sadder when there's no guard at all. One country, our one Motherland, yet the Forest Department and the Forest Guard are experiencing their third state. The Russian Empire, the USSR, and now today's Russia. And every time it's the same story... but now it's repeating for the third time! It's like some kind of "Groundhog Day"! The collapse of a painstakingly adjusted system with the death of the previous state, a period of no control over the forests, and then the authorities suddenly scramble to restore the guard of our forests. And yes, the loss of large areas of forests during the period without protection...

I studied the historical experience of foresters from the Russian Empire. I was primarily interested in how forest restoration was organized back then. I became interested in the Forest Guard along the way. Everything was organized as follows. There were state forest inspectors. They were in charge of forest rangers. Essentially, foresters.

Forests were divided into patrol areas and routes within those areas. A ranger lived with his family on his section. He was in charge of foot patrols, the watchmen. So, each knew his section perfectly. He knew all the ins and outs, clearly understood who, when, and where might illegally cut down trees. Later, during Soviet times, the forest protection system was restored in a similar manner.

But what struck me was how the foresters were armed. Tough guys, however! The patrolmen had cavalry sabers, and the rangers had sapper machetes. And they had firearms, which they were allowed to use in the following cases: by order of the forester, when capturing bandits, at the request of the police, and in defense.

Even more interesting were their living conditions. As I mentioned, they lived with their families on their sections. They were allocated land plots up to 20

desyatinas, and an additional 1.5 desyatinas for a house and estate. For reference, a desyatina equals 2400 square sazhen, or 109.25 ares, or 1.09 hectares! So, up to 20 hectares of land plus one and a half hectares for a house! Back then, they lived off their own farming. Land was a significant value.

I'll add that the Forest Guard was organized on a principle somewhat similar to the Cossacks. Forester positions were offered to experienced military men, and younger family members were considered in service and trained in forestry from a young age. Foresters were exempt from performing natural communal and conscription duties. In case of injury, they received (in case of death — their families) monetary benefits. So, tax-free status and full social insurance.

So, a forester was a serious man. Well-armed. And with significant authority. Far from poor, 20 hectares for his own farm were in addition to his salary. With a horse, a saber, and self-respect.

Well, look at that! And now the government, aware of the issue of low population in the Far East, is offering 1 hectare of land, supposedly as a gift!

I roughly figured out for myself how today's forest protection should look to approximately match the authority and provision of the tsarist era.

I'll leave salary out of the equation. A forester (forest protection officer) is entitled to 1.5 hectares of land for a house and up to 20 hectares, if desired, for running his own farm. An SUV (a horse before), a carbine, a 'short-barrel' (instead of a saber). The right to use weapons when detaining a criminal ('when catching bandits') and in defense. Full social package, for him and his family members. In line with today's world changes, let's add communication.

Satellite internet at home and a satellite phone on patrol. Online programs for homeschooling children. A telemedicine program, mobile medical teams visiting foresters' posts for check-ups, say, once a year. Air ambulance for emergencies. Exemption from taxes and military service for sons if they choose to work 1.5 years as junior foresters under their father's guidance instead.

It's simple: bring back, as they say, the tsar and conditions equivalent to the Russian Empire at a modern level. There will be plenty of people willing to serve as foresters, and poachers will quickly disappear. They'll shoot each other off, with such royal service conditions, those poachers!

Chapter 31. We can't please everyone

Not everyone likes my efforts to protect the Russian Taiga. That's normal. If someone tells me they have no enemies, I won't believe they have friends. If you have friends and fellow supporters, you always have enemies. It can't be any other way. And there are those who write that they don't understand my work. I've written many times about what I do and why. I guess it's necessary to repeat it. New people come along. I work so that as many people as possible learn about the problems with our forests! I apologize to regular readers for the brief repetitions.

The Russian Taiga project exists primarily to make as many people as possible aware of the destruction of large forest areas in our country. So that the issues of preserving forest territories don't "fade into the background" and can't be silenced. Only then can effective government measures be taken (and the scope and complexity of the issue are such, as I've written many times, that they can only be solved at the federal

level!) to preserve the Russian Taiga for our children and grandchildren.

Systematically, detractors, and perhaps just people who haven't bothered to think before making such statements, accuse me of lacking real action. "Just words." "Empty PR."

Friends, pay attention to two very simple points.

First: to solve any issue, any problem, you first need to articulate it. First — the Word.

And second: to solve a big problem, a global issue, the efforts of many, many people are needed. Cooperation is necessary.

Now, after a long time and many efforts, the Russian Taiga project has started to be noticed by the authorities. I can't even say that a dialogue is being established. No, it's just the first step toward dialogue. The authorities, officials, have started talking about the problems out loud. I was pleased that the authorities said for the first time: "Yes, this is indeed a problem for the state. The state hears its citizens and needs society's participation in preserving the country's forest resources." And immediately in the comments and messages, I got statements like: "You're cozying up to the authorities." Honestly, I'm about ready to start...

uh... using some colorful language!

I understand all the shortcomings of the existing system of state governance. I understand that I'm interested in preserving (or better yet, expanding!) the Russian Taiga. Period. It can be left unused: it already provides us, humans, with plenty of benefits. Government bodies are interested in exploiting the forests, and they are ready to fight poaching and corruption in the forestry sector based on economic interests.

Neither poachers nor corrupt officials pay anything into the state budget. In this case, the reasons don't matter. The common interest: by controlling logging for tax collection, the state also curbs the predatory destruction of the taiga. And any statements like "no cooperation with the authorities" are complete nonsense.

Our country, our homeland, and that of our ancestors, hasn't changed. It's the same country, but there have been several states. First the Russian Empire, then the USSR, and now the Russian Federation. I've written this many times and will probably repeat it many more. The system of forest restoration has been established several times. Destroyed. And then restored several times. There are huge, now somewhat forgotten achievements and experiences of Soviet forestry engineers.

Large areas of forests, including those being logged now, are secondary forests, plantings by tsarist foresters. Now, when the government is once again concerned with controlling the country's forests, we need to assist them however we can. Our society is also a living organism. And the governing bodies have lost their receptors, their nerve endings on the periphery. Society as a whole can solve this if we don't remain silent. If information about regional problems becomes public knowledge and reaches the ministries.

For those interested: I can clearly state my political preferences. I'm not for the "whites" or the "reds." I'm for the preservation of the Russian Taiga. Just as migratory birds have no state borders, our taiga gives us air, regulates the water balance, regardless of what passport we have in our pocket. I'm not inclined to judge the "rightness" or "wrongness" of anyone's actions to protect the forests from destruction. What's important is that there are actions. Any actions are important, and approaches can vary. Any ally in the fight is important.

And lastly for today. Probably in the realm of humor. Among the comments from "moderate opponents," I came across a statement that the term "logging" is incorrect. The correct term is "sawing." I officially declare on behalf of Pavel Pashkov, that is, on my own

behalf:

Let's help each other in the fight to preserve the Russian Taiga from predatory logging, cutting, and other forms of forest destruction in our country. We'll discuss the terms for these villainous actions later.

Chapter 32. The apocalypse of capitalism

The era of corporations. Social networks have grown to the point where they can consider competing with traditional territorial states. And why not? At first glance, they have everything except a piece of land! This isn't new in history either. Let's recall the omnipotence of the Catholic Church or even its individual Orders, like the Templars or Jesuits. Historically, such "states without territories" emerged at the twilight of an era. At that moment, when all-powerful Time swept them away along with the historical moment that gave rise to them.

A new era has arrived, often called capitalism. The age of industry. Industrialization. Land grabs. Cities sprawling into megacities. The cartel agreements of the early "robber barons" of business, merging in corrupt embraces with government officials in a frenzy of greed. And individuals creating corporations, transnational monsters, crushing the economies of small countries beneath them. Or bribing politicians to serve their own goals, as happens everywhere.

Their time has passed, friends! We live at the turning point of an era! Capitalism is already dead, and we are witnessing the agony of the state-monopoly monster. Most importantly, social and technological processes are now moving faster. Significantly, hundreds, thousands of times faster than during the collapse of feudal empires and their replacement by young capitalism.

Take a look back. Let's remember in broad strokes what capitalism was like in its youth. A dream in the books of Jules Verne. Inventors, scientists who became entrepreneurial creators. Ford, Tesla, Nobel, and others. Back then, it was about expansion, a thirst for freedom. Not the convulsions of a vampire devouring the world, destroying the entire natural environment around it. That's what business empires have become, which were once created by dreamers, creators, and builders. His Majesty Time, the inevitable, likely social cycle.

But human society is alive. Part of the Earth, part of nature. The outdated dies in such suffering to make way for the new. Our world is about to be reborn, like the Phoenix. And our task now is to ensure that this rebirth is not from the ashes of nuclear war. Not from the depths of poisons flooding everything around. Already, ordinary people, feeling the breath of the approaching new era, are changing their lives. Privately, for

themselves. To live now in the future they envision. Where Humanity will be in harmony with the world. Where people will create living systems, regulate biocenoses.

Not all of you will believe me right away, perhaps. But it is us, friends! We are the emerging elite of the new era! Look around: there are already isolated pockets of this future world. There are people buying up pieces of the planet and growing forests, creating their own ecological communities in local areas. There are people building a minimalist way of life simply for themselves, streamlining their homes and belongings. This is not some insignificant nonsense, as it may seem! These are the first shoots of something new!

And we, even by simply choosing different values in everyday life, not only bring the era of Life a little closer. We also hold back the trends of the past at the same time. We increase the chances that society will be reborn not from the ashes of nuclear apocalypse, but only from the ashes of forest fires. Painful too. Difficult too. But still easier and faster.

To restrain the attempts of the dying part of society to kill the whole world along with itself and to create islands of the future: that is our goal today! Apocalypse

in ancient Greek doesn't mean “death,” but “new knowledge,” “revelation,” “unveiling.” Death awaits only the outdated, grotesque forms of mindless consumption.

Changes are inevitable!

I keep saying that changes, the transition to an eco-friendly lifestyle, are inevitable! Through our active efforts, we accelerate this transition. Which means we preserve more living forests. Which means we resist the uncontrolled use of pesticides that end up in our food. And so much more! You see, from Russian Taiga, I gradually move on to expanding the range of issues.

Because everything is interconnected. Without solving one, we cannot solve the other. And at the root of the problems are outdated models of societal life. Outdated approaches of power, government bodies that don't hear people at all. But they hear monopolists destroying the natural environment very well! Yet changes are still happening. Here's a fresh example.

Cars have become a burden. In Moscow, people have started giving up personal cars. For the first time, this has become noticeable in statistics! Residents are switching to public transport, bicycles, taxis. Why? Analysts say it's simply because maintaining a car is too expensive. I think they underestimate the growing

awareness among people, the understanding of ecological issues by the youth.

According to a survey by Roland Berger, 45% of Russians are ready to give up their personal cars in favor of driverless taxis. Additionally, 20% of Russians are willing to reduce the number of trips they take and drive less frequently. This is a trend! Car sharing is booming: last year, the Russian car rental market grew fivefold, reaching 7 billion.

And this process is happening all over the world! There's a trend towards giving up personal cars and rethinking daily habits in favor of an eco-friendly lifestyle.

Living in harmony with the environment is becoming fashionable and modern!

Chapter 33. "Barbaric law"

Strength and weakness. Freedom and lack of freedom. I don't use the word "slavery" as the opposite of freedom. That's a topic for another discussion. "Who am I, a person with rights, or a trembling creature?" Something like that, a loose quote, not verbatim.

Are you a free person? Are you a civilized person? What are your rights and freedoms? Are you a strong person? Or at least, would you like to be a strong person, in the positive sense? Would you like to feel free or not free?

I listed questions that seem to have clear answers for the vast majority. You want to be a free, civilized person whose rights and freedoms are guaranteed. By the Constitution, the state, society—it doesn't really matter. In short, they're ensured. And yes: on a personal level, it feels good to see yourself as a strong person. Many can't say that about themselves, but they wish they could. They just realize they're lacking "willpower," as they say.

But many work on this: they strive for a conscious lifestyle, attend workshops, and so on. It's a path, right? And they're on their way to becoming strong individuals. To self-realization. Overall, the level of realization and awareness increases, doesn't it? And society as a whole becomes more humane, civilized, and free, right? Progressive people start thinking about ecology, nature, and a cleaner, more eco-friendly lifestyle, correct? Progress. Societal progress. Personal progress: personal growth workshops, awareness schools, practices for unleashing feminine power, and clubs for traditional martial arts—all at the service of the civilized person.

I won't answer the questions. I just asked them. My answer won't help any of you. Because such questions require your own answer.

Civilization is the state, citizenship of the state. A civilized person is someone who belongs to the state. Recognizing the rules and values of a specific state, if you broaden it a bit. All "human rights and freedoms" are the rights and freedoms of a citizen of the state. Laws mention both: "human rights" and "citizen rights." Often together: "human and citizen rights." But it always means one thing: the rights and freedoms of a civilized person, a citizen. A fine line!

Such fine, indistinguishable boundaries are characteristic of important, defining concepts. From hate to love is one step. And one step from life to death.

One step, and the exploration and mastery of the surrounding world turned into the destruction of everything around us. Looking at the destructiveness of today's global civilization, it's hard to believe, but we're just one step away from harmonious interaction with the natural environment. We see more of a "teenage awkwardness" in the civilizational model. People who take the time to think about such global issues understand this. Our civilization (and it's shared, one for all on the planet) has everything. It has all the power and means to solve any issues. It just lacks experience. Just like a teenager: grown up, educated, but lacking experience.

On a personal level as well. The rights and freedoms of a person, the rights and freedoms of a strong, free individual, are inseparable from ourselves. We gain them as we grow up, becoming self-aware. No constitution or state can grant or take them away. Human rights, this "barbaric right"—it has nothing to do with civilization. No teacher, sensei, trainer, or coach can even come close to teaching you freedom.

The Russian Taiga can. That's why I fight for the preservation of wild territories, where people with their civilization wouldn't even dare to intrude! A haven of barbarism and the Old Gods. Where people could come to learn freedom and humanity.

Human thinking now is like some kind of "caveman" mindset.

First, it must change. For some small part of people. For the elite of society. It's not always the narrowly scientific, intellectual elite. But them too. The elite of society is broader. All who can sense the future. Poets, mystics, romantics, visionaries—they're even more capable of this than purely intellectuals, scientists. It's a kind of psyche attuned to the wave of the future. And there are giants who can see far beyond the horizon.

It's hard to define who they are. Vernadsky—not just a scientist. Roerich, with his Living Ethics—not just an artist. Academician Obruchev with his "Sannikov Land." Our distant ancestors had it easier in this regard. They didn't try to fit a person into the narrow bed of social definition. They didn't dissect those "suffering from Leonardo da Vinci syndrome" into their facets. They simply believed that sometimes the Gods descend to earth and walk among us.

The harbingers of the Ecosphere era were here decades ago! We are the ones who will live in this era. We are the ones who need to start creating the oases of the future. It's already about engineering, not dreams and assumptions. I look around at my homeland during my wanderings through the Russian Taiga. Well, what a "layered cake" it is! Feudalism on the outskirts, in the hinterlands. Wild, predatory forms of big business buying up regional authorities wholesale. Imperial "brandishing of the club" by the "higher-ups" amid cries of "Oh no, we're surrounded by enemies"! It's kind of scary: that club is nuclear! What kind of caveman antics are these!

Right now, there's a clear change in the climate. It was predicted, forecasted before. Not everything is exactly as modeled. But the process is underway, and it's already noticeable in practice! You can argue whether it's 100% human influence or natural planetary cycles. But for practical purposes, it doesn't matter much: what's happening is visible. It's not important anymore why! And the impact of technology is strong! At the very least, it definitely exacerbates the situation.

The authorities are taking everything into account! Climate change has now become a matter of international politics. But not in the interests of

Humanity and civilization. Once again, it's all about the cries over dividing spheres of influence and the squabbling over who will gain what from it. The war for the Northern Sea Route. The war for resources becoming accessible as the ice melts. The war for water, competitive buying of territories for water-intensive agricultural crops.

War, war, war! The ideas of a caveman with a big club in the minds of the rulers of technological empires. Even seemingly peaceful activities, like growing rice or alfalfa, on a global scale turn into a war for resources.

You look at all this and think: we have all the resources! The only thing missing is modern thinking. At least reach the level of thinking of the ancient Northern Ancestors! At least take a step in your minds from the Dark Lord of Mordor to the Creator God! Don't conquer, create!

Odin, son of Borr and Bestla, grandson of Buri. Emulate him then! A sage and shaman, a master of Runes and legends, a priest-king, a sorcerer-warrior — he still walks the earth today. Odin the one-eyed. He gave his eye to Mimir to drink from the well of wisdom. Self-sacrifice in the name of wisdom — that's worthy of emulation! To grasp the power of the Runes, he

sacrificed himself again. For nine days and nights, he hung on the trunk of the ash tree Yggdrasil, pinned to it by his own spear.

A seeker of wisdom, sacrificing himself for his people — that's a worthy image of a leader! Not a jackal tearing at Mother Earth's body and fighting with other jackals like him.

Chapter 34. What is a "biological system?"

What is a "biocenosis," a "forest organism"—these are concepts I constantly use in my writings. Now, in understanding the fires that have engulfed the Russian Taiga, this is once again the most important question! Because it's the foundation. Not everyone understands what we're even talking about, what exactly we're losing! The "economic indicators" that administrators talk about—it's complete ignorance of the issue. What nonsense they spout!

When a library burns down, they tell us 8 tons of paper were lost! What kind of assessment is that?! Books are a source of knowledge, information. Paper is just the material on which the text is printed. Sure, there's a loss of paper. But that's not the most important loss! The Russian Taiga is not just cubic meters of timber, just like a book is not just paper! As I write this, I think: With assessments like these, are rats our librarians now?

Who else would evaluate a book by its weight in paper?! And I can already see the audience nodding in agreement. Some are even giving a standing ovation. And these are primarily real forestry specialists. When the Forest Code was updated to the modern version a little over ten years ago, these specialists were the first to talk about the collapse of the forest management system. They immediately said—if we make these changes, we won't be able to fight fires or engage in reforestation technically! Later, environmental organizations started talking about it.

So what are we losing? With an adequate assessment that aligns with modern scientific understanding, "commercial timber" accounts for only about 10% of the forest's "economic potential," no more! Let me give you a couple of examples.

1. The authorities of the Republic of Palau, the American Virgin Islands, and Hawaii have legally banned sunscreen. The creams harm local ecosystems.

The restrictions apply to sunscreens containing 10 compounds, including oxybenzone, octocrylene, octinoxate, and parabens—ingredients currently found in most sun-protection creams and lotions. These compounds are dangerous to reefs because they inhibit

the growth of young corals and contribute to bleaching. According to the BBC, between 6,000 and 14,000 metric tons of sunscreen enter the water near coral reefs every year.

The loss of coral reefs poses negative consequences for fisheries, coastal protection, ecotourism, and other uses of coral reefs. According to forecasts based on the latest scientific data and modeling results, the majority of the world's tropical and subtropical coral reefs, especially in shallow waters, will suffer from annual bleaching by 2050 and may ultimately cease to exist as sources of goods and services. The economy, nothing else! But only with proper assessment! The consequences are not just for small island nations and fishermen on tiny boats! In the United States alone, reefs generate at least $3.4 billion annually. And this isn't about "chipping off pieces of reefs for souvenirs!"

Remember in "The Left-Hander"? "Tsar, Father, abroad they haven't cleaned guns with broken bricks for a long time"?!!

2. The second example of interconnections in a natural ecosystem. And how this is already being considered in the modern world. I'm quoting a small note from gismeteo.ru in full.

"The authorities of the Canary Island of Tenerife plan to introduce fines for building towers out of pebbles that cover the beaches.

The island's parliament decided on this drastic measure due to statements from biologists, which were supported by the public. It turns out that pebbles are the foundation of the local ecosystem. Algae grow on the underside of each stone, serving as food for mollusks, reptiles, and crustaceans. With constant movement of the stones, the amount of algae decreases, and consequently, there is less food for other participants in the food chain.

Biologists recorded a video that clearly shows how harmless "towers" harm the ecosystem. Volunteers constantly patrol the pebble beaches and dismantle the structures built by vacationers. But by the next morning, the structures reappear.

Activists decided to enlist the support of the local parliament, proposing a system of fines for those who enjoy building pebble towers. Local residents supported the initiative, and now the issue is being resolved in parliament."

Here are two small examples. This is the level of understanding of connections in natural ecosystems. In the world, not here! And these are economic assessments. Local authorities make such decisions to protect natural ecosystems for economic reasons.

Here, they say that "putting out fires in the Russian Taiga is economically unfeasible" and "remote areas have no economic value at all because exporting timber from there isn't profitable"! How many years have these administrators been "morally outdated"? 50, 100?! Are they actually "time travelers" from some kind of Stone Age?!

Chapter 35. Preserve the Greater Altai

A brief illustration of the necessity for global protected territories.

Let's delve into a very important topic. This is a key issue for the future of our country. Moreover, it's a key issue for the ecology of the entire Eurasian continent and the whole planet!

I believe that the Sayan-Altai mountain region should be declared a reserve of planetary significance.

This question hasn't been raised. But it must be raised and resolved globally in this way: a planetary zone of ecological tranquility. I'll explain point by point why this is so. And why it's so important to every resident of our country, whether they live in Moscow or Vladivostok, also for politico-economic reasons.

The global ecological picture of Central Asia.

Air masses from the Arctic Ocean pour rain on the slopes of the Greater Altai that stand in their path. A blessed land with preserved unique natural ecosystems.

The 'living,' ancient cedar taiga. And mountain meadows and swamps. Everything is divided by numerous mountain ranges, and individual ecosystems are endemic and exceptional.

Here, humans have extracted minerals, but no irreparable damage has been done yet. Here are the sources of the Irtysh in Eastern Kazakhstan; the Biya and Katun, merging into the Ob in our country, in the Altai Republic. The sources of the Yenisei are also here, in the Tuva Republic, and the Oka (Aka) and Irkut rivers, again in our Buryatia Republic. A unique zone where the greatest rivers originate.

The sources of rivers are a determining factor not only for ecology but also for economy and politics.

The Altai collects rains, and behind it lie the arid regions of Central Asia. The Gobi Desert in Mongolia. And the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region — the largest territorial-administrative unit in China. And a place where water is also scarce.

The global political picture of Central Asia.

For us, the defining factor will be the Xinjiang Uygur region of the PRC. This is a vast territory, politically and economically developed by the modern Chinese empire quite recently. Many peoples lived here, a significant

part of whom are Uygurs. To us, they may look similar, but they are not Chinese (Han). These are different peoples, with completely different languages and cultures. Now the Chinese empire is pursuing a policy of assimilation there, massively relocating Chinese (Han), who occupy all administrative positions completely.

As an example to understand the situation: imagine that 10% of Icelanders were relocated to your locality. I hope Icelanders won't be offended: I'm using this only as an example! All positions, both officials and police, teachers and doctors, are occupied only by Icelanders. Speaking and writing — in Icelandic. If you marry an Icelander and learn the language perfectly, you can also take minor positions. I understand this unequivocally as cultural genocide and an already realized version of 'technofascism' from grim science fiction forecasts. I have no desire to play with readers in 'political correctness' of statements. I say directly: here is a living example of what will happen to the peoples and cultures of the territory where the economic interests of the Chinese empire come.

The region is vast and rich. If China's industry in 'old' regions has already consumed everything around it and turned the natural environment into a dump, then here such 'progress' has only begun. Rich mineral deposits

are being developed. Agriculture is developing. And there is a severe lack of water. The Irtysh and Ili rivers originate in Xinjiang and then flow through Kazakhstan. Now, with the growth of industry and agriculture, the situation is such that Kazakhstan is left without water. Likely, in the very near future, Lake Balkhash in Kazakhstan will face the fate of the Aral Sea. The developing economy of the Chinese empire in Xinjiang is already consuming all available water and wants more.

A brief chronology of 'friendship with Chinese comrades.'

2004. An agreement was reached between Gazprom and the Chinese state oil and gas company CNPC on the development of strategic cooperation.

In 2006, during a visit to China, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that by 2011, an export gas pipeline would be built from Russia to China, which would eventually transport up to 80 billion cubic meters of natural gas per year. According to Putin, the gas would flow to China via two routes—from Western and Eastern Siberia.

The 'Power of Siberia-2' ('Altai') gas pipeline project emerges — between the gas fields of Western Siberia and the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in western

China. The pipeline is planned to pass through the territory of a natural park — the unique high-altitude Ukok Plateau in the Altai Republic, considered sacred by the Altai people.

People are against it. And I have great respect for their view: no strangers will drive bulldozers over their native land, where their ancestors are buried, just to line the pockets of some shady outsider.

2008. The media began spreading information, quoting an official statement supposedly released by the Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation, claiming that due to non-competitiveness and economic impracticality, the Altai pipeline project was removed from the general development plan of the Russian gas industry until 2030. However, the Ministry of Energy stated that it had not released any such official statements.

An attempt to use disinformation to defuse the discontent of those defending their land.

2014. At the 2014 APEC summit in Beijing, alongside the agreement signed in May 2014 for gas supplies to China via the eastern route "Power of Siberia," a memorandum and framework agreement were also signed to nearly double gas supplies to China through the western route

"Altai."

2018. The Chinese Society for Exchanges and Cooperation between Russia, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and China approached Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev with a request to support a project for constructing a water pipeline from the Altai region to China. The proposed pipeline project for Russia includes two stages. In the first stage, by 2026, the plan is to build the initial phase of the main pipeline Russia — Kazakhstan — Western China with a capacity of 600–700 million cubic meters and a network of distribution pipelines.

In the second phase, by 2040, "modern agrotechnical" and other projects aimed at "increasing water use efficiency in the border areas of China, Kazakhstan, and Russia" may be implemented. There are also plans to build the second phase of the main water pipeline, which will increase the total capacity to 1.8–2.4 billion cubic meters per year. According to expert estimates, the length of the pipeline from Russia to China will be 1,200–1,500 km.

The current situation regarding relations with China in the Greater Altai region.

— The pipeline projects through the Altai Republic haven't been canceled. They're being prepared quietly, fearing the local population's outrage.

"China is even more interested in water. There have been, and still persist, rumors about behind-the-scenes discussions of a water pipeline directly from the territory of the Altai Republic. The economic value of a gas pipeline here is minimal. The authorities of our country have stated that a gas pipeline from Western Siberia cannot be routed through Kazakhstan, for example, due to political reasons. Over time, the situation might develop similarly to the gas pipeline through Ukraine."

But it seems very much like the gas pipeline through the Altai Republic is urgently needed for other reasons. The pipeline already laid through Ukok will deprive environmentalists and the local population of arguments against a water pipeline later. They'll say: look, there's already a gas pipe, it won't get any worse with another pipe next to it! "Soft power policy," which the Chinese Empire so loves and officially proclaims!

"China needs water so much that, it turns out, even our authorities are ready to immediately build a water pipeline from the Altai Krai, bypassing the 'inconvenient'

Altai Republic. And through Kazakhstan—sure! Well, it's easy to understand Kazakhstan here: take water from anywhere, just don't kill the Irtysh and Ili! Otherwise, along with them, our economy will die, our land will perish, and our Lake Balkhash will dry up."

"Because without water — you're stuck!"

According to UN data, over 50 years, water supply to the population of Central Asia has decreased by 3.5 times. According to Global Water Initiative estimates, by 2025 it could reach a critical level — 1.7 cubic meters per person per year.

China ranks sixth in the world for water reserves. But more than half of the river areas in the seven largest river systems are polluted. Water from 40% of sources is not suitable for drinking at all. The reason is the discharge of untreated industrial water by enterprises, as well as "extremely high air pollution and widespread land contamination." Water reserves are unevenly distributed: the biggest shortage is in Beijing, Shanghai, and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. And Xinjiang is developing at the fastest pace.

The water shortage threatens agricultural development in northern China and could lead "to serious consequences in the form of food shortages." In the

north of the country, the total freshwater deficit is 70 billion cubic meters, and in the XUAR — at least 12–15 billion cubic meters.

The "pushing" of the idea of a large water pipeline in China is longstanding. Back in May 2016, Alexander Tkachev, then head of the Ministry of Agriculture, proposed a project in Beijing to transfer water to China's arid region. It was about supplying 70 million cubic meters of water from the Altai Krai to the XUAR: this is the "surplus" that results from spring floods. Our authorities argue that the Altai Krai regularly suffers from spring floods.

In 2017, The Guardian wrote about China's plans to build a 1,000 km long pipeline to transport water from Lake Baikal to the northern Chinese province of Gansu.

Conclusions: why preserving the Greater Altai is vital for all the people of our country.

“A real battle for resources, primarily for water, is unfolding right now.”

— Building gas pipelines or aqueducts also means constructing regular roads alongside them. All of this sharply increases the risk of direct military conflict. To the point of inevitability. It’s no longer just a "neighboring side" for the adjacent country, but the

infrastructure of its own industry and agriculture.

— Nowadays, eco-friendly products from Altai, like honey and medicinal herbs, are already a brand. And they truly are eco-friendly! They’re sold in stores in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and other cities. There’s potential for further regional development in this direction: eco-products and tourism. Highways, pipelines, and aqueducts will lead to the development of the region’s economy and industry. That’s true. Which will instantly kill the ecology. How do you like these brands: "Chelyabinsk Honey" or "Cherepovets Herbs"?

— The aqueduct will only take floodwaters, only in the spring, and the rest of the time it will just sit idle. Yeah, right! The main thing is to build it—and then they’ll "adjust the water intake quotas."

"The entire global system of Central Asia will be disrupted. All the mechanisms of natural regulation. In this system, there can't be any 'excess' floodwaters! Pull out one brick from the foundation, and the whole building collapses! The Aral today, Balkhash tomorrow—it's clear what the result will be! And Lake Teletskoye, and Baikal, are they next? To feed the 'Han dragon'?! It'll drink them dry too, and it won't be enough."

"And let's not forget about the 'soft power policy'!"

Let's not forget that Xinjiang means 'new frontier' or 'new boundaries' in Chinese. What boundaries are next, dear neighbor?

I believe the Sayan-Altai mountain region should be declared a nature reserve of planetary significance.

There are hardly any regions like this left in the world. We need international status as a specially protected area at the river sources. Today, the local people didn't defend their home. They only postponed the problem, but that's something! I think only a special international status can preserve the region. Otherwise, there are too many eager to sell something on our side, and to buy something on the neighbor's side.

Chapter 36. About the giant industry and the little people

Again and again, I see the media tossing around trendy buzzwords: “ecoterrorists,” “ecofascists.” They even put them in quotes. But how long until they stop using those quotes? The concept is already introduced into public discussion! Even more troubling is seeing descriptions of conflicts between people. Moreover, I believe these conflicts are artificial. They’re being provoked. Ordinary people are being pitted against each other. People, just people, equally suffering from environmental pollution. Only some understand it, and some don’t. And with various arguments, manipulating them, there’s a strong effort to make people quarrel with each other.

A certain stage in societal development has passed. A significant number of people have come to understand the conditions we live in. Polluted air, water, and food directly affect us. It’s not even about the future of our children; it’s about our own lives! What’s the point of having a bunch of trendy stuff if you’re just going to die from cancer, specifically caused by the chemical plant

right next to you?!

There’s the internet, there are means of communication, there are social networks. And people have started discussing these issues. Our opinions have started reaching the authorities! In response, “Big Business” isn’t just sitting idly by. They have money and experienced advertising specialists. I doubt I’m wrong! There are now conscious, planned PR campaigns to discredit environmental and conservation movements.

There’s a foundation in society for this. To understand how much harm, say, industrial emissions cause, you need certain knowledge, time, and effort to think about it. Only a small part of people understand this. And 80% live paycheck to paycheck and work at the same plant. They’re heavily propagandized that if the plant closes, they’ll be left without jobs and money.

Even if they have to implement new purification technologies, it’s expensive. The company management will be forced to reduce the workers’ salaries. Lies, of course! But they’re not going to reduce the owners’ profits, right?! And here, under the pretext of extra environmental expenses, they cut salaries too—profits only grow!

During an expedition across Russia, I wrote about Cherepovets. The air is terrible, you can barely breathe. I described this. And for the first time, I received about ten letters from people who strongly objected. “What are you talking about?! Everything’s fine here!” Honestly, I was shocked by such a reaction: how can you not notice this and consider it normal? Then I thought about it, discussed it with others. And I started to understand why this happens. People haven’t seen anything else in their lives, so they consider it normal. They work every day, then have household chores. There’s no time to think about anything else. And often, special knowledge is needed to understand.

In Kuzbass, a conversation with a doctor helped me understand this. A doctor, experienced, already older. He said the following.

“People don’t understand that they’re getting sick because of the production. They don’t even believe it when you tell them. I see medical records every day. I can already say that if it’s a specific form of cancer, then they work or worked at a specific plant. Sometimes I can even name the specific workshop.”

“And you,” I ask, “why don’t you leave? If you know this, understand the risks?”

“I have an apartment here,” he replies, “and my wife doesn’t want to. I’ve suggested it several times, but she’s against it. Housing here is cheap. If we sell, we won’t be able to buy anything with that money. And we’d have to find new jobs.”

Here I’m at a loss again: if you’re aware of the danger, why don’t you change anything? Can you buy health? Too lazy to move? Or is it a subconscious pull towards slow and painful self-destruction?

And it’s like this everywhere! I’ve seen it with my own eyes in many places. I’ve heard similar thoughts from different people. And people live like this for years, changing nothing. Let me give another example. Krasnoyarsk. Industrial giants from Soviet times. From a letter by writer Viktor Astafyev to the chairman of the then-Soviet regional executive committee, Viktor Plisov: “In Krasnoyarsk, a crime has become commonplace—at dawn, around five o’clock, chemical and other plants, containing harmful gases and impurities, ‘quietly’ release them outside. I don’t know about the regional executive committee and its surroundings, but in Akademgorodok, when the ‘low wind’ blows, these gases and the smell of chemical mixtures are noticeably felt. What’s happening in those houses and areas located near these plants?!”

1987!

32 years have passed!!!

People, you can't stay silent forever! Neither the authorities nor the "masters of life" who profit from the enterprises where you work will do anything voluntarily! They raise the permissible emission standards. They obstruct public oversight of emissions. They avoid installing pollution sensors. And they pit different groups of the population against each other.

Don't fall for provocations! And use terms correctly, don't let yourself be confused!

"Eco-activists" are the people who are defending your interests. Even if you don't realize it. Or, like an ostrich, you "bury your head in the sand" and refuse to think about real problems!

But "eco-fascists" and "eco-terrorists" are the corporate owners who pollute the environment for profit.

Chapter 37. Reflections on agriculture

I am what I eat—so to what extent am I already a herbicide?

On expeditions, especially in the Far East, I encountered agricultural production. In general, I came across many topics I hadn't approached before. Trash bins and dumps are the same: ugh, disgusting! I started my “acquaintance” with the dumps in our forests, with the placement of solid waste landfills in the Russian Taiga. Gradually, I got to know the “waste reform,” the interests of “Big Business” in it. And upon detailed examination, many things turn out not to be what they seem at first. “Big Business” isn’t “business” in the sense of “enterprise.”

It's a big mess, to put it bluntly: a monopoly backed by power. Based on outdated technologies that don’t match reality or future challenges. Innovation is just an imitation. Furthermore, household waste, what we see and what causes some public protests, is just the tip of

the iceberg! There's much more industrial waste. And it's even more dangerous, yet people aren't informed about it. Departmental regulations change, permissible concentrations in the natural environment increase, and that's it. And the general public doesn't know a thing about it! At all!

And the question is universal: the same problems I saw and felt in the Russian Taiga. The power of monopolies, capital, multiplied by legitimate state power. And the ordinary, simple person is removed even from understanding the problems. In all spheres of life—an industrial, manufacturing approach. The owner of a virtual, abstract entity—money—is separated from the land, from resources, from people. Often, they're from another country entirely, a multinational company or an offshore in the Bahamas. And all the super-profits are gained only by the total destruction of the Russian Taiga, the land, and the people living on it. It's like a cancerous tumor on the body of society!

Agriculture at its core isn't "farming," but the same industry. Agricultural production. I encountered it closely for the first time. I was invited, shown how and on what everything is grown. Before, I'd seen small personal farms. But this is fundamentally different! Not the same at all! And of what we eat, what we can buy in

the store—the overwhelming majority is industrial. Undoubtedly more than 90% is industrial production.

So now I'm thinking. Somehow, my appetite disappears when I see how what's called "food products" is produced. I've previously encountered the gifts of the Russian Taiga. I know many who harvest mushrooms, berries, or herbs. There's even a market for such products. In our country—a small one. On the expedition, I encountered this closely again. You know what they say? The volume of harvesting, demand—is growing. Only the demand abroad is growing even faster, and prices are higher.

It's more profitable to sell to China, to Japan. Many simply stop working for the domestic market within Russia. And even such gifts of the Russian Taiga are flowing out of the country. That's the economic situation. The recent squabble between the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ministry of Agriculture over who will control this flow of wild plants also happened amid cries about "export potential." Our domestic market doesn't interest anyone.

I'm now sharing my thoughts with the reader. My own "selfish" interest. This used to come up: you'd try some homemade bread at someone's house in a distant

village. You want more! You'd eat only that! Then it's forgotten. Back to the usual store, and you return to the familiar. But now I've seen how it's done on an industrial basis. And I'm thinking about a radical, long-term solution. How to avoid eating THIS?

We now have "eco" and "organic" brands, and entire stores under such brands. But I don't trust them anymore either. I visited a dairy farm. Sales are precisely "eco," by order of a retail chain. Stall confinement. Hormones, stimulants, antibiotics "for preventive purposes"—all present. Hay, silage, feed—from regular fields, the same set. I spoke with the veterinarian. He invited me and showed me everything. And he understands perfectly! But what can you do, that's the system, he says. Otherwise, milk output will be lower, there won't be profits. "Eco" is purely for advertising, it turns out?! And that's the system. I saw one case, but I'd assume it's the same in similar situations.

There's a small segment of small farms that are looking towards truly clean products. These are people who simply want decent food for themselves! But not everyone can make it happen. They can't manage the sales: such products end up being more expensive. There will be less milk, and the costs of maintenance, on

the contrary, will rise. I came across an interesting piece. Belarus. But it's the same story; the person says exactly what people in Siberia and the Far East have told me. I'll quote the interview so you can hear the opinion of someone who is fully "in the know." From the inside, so to speak, not just my retelling.

Speaking is Elena Sidorova, owner of the "SidSad" farm in the village of Dashki, Minsk district, Belarus.

"— As for organic production, we initially did everything as science dictates: by the books, guides for agronomists. When we first got here, we cleared the land with glyphosate. I personally respect chemistry as a science and fully understand what everything is made of. But when we started living in the center of our land, it became clear that using chemicals was impossible. We saw how the treatment was done, smelled all the odors, noticed how lifeless the soil became. It was frightening when after treatment some cloud drifted into the forest, and then burns were clearly visible on the leaves of the trees. We experienced firsthand all the harm that people don't usually talk about.

It's like a game for the agronomist: will they handle the task or not? The logic extends no more than two steps. For example, there are weeds, and this issue needs to be

addressed. Or the plants have some disease, and it needs to be dealt with. And that's it, the scope of tasks doesn't go beyond that. But we, after placing our lives at the center of the farm, expanded our scope of tasks to the maximum scale. We needed to organize our habitat. And it turned out that living among chemical fields is very uncomfortable and poses significant health risks.

It's a global practice that for a farmer, their fields are their habitat, land that needs care. But here, the owner is somewhere, the field is somewhere else, and people live on the outskirts. These people have no connection to this land, yet they take 100% of the impact from all sorts of treatments. I'm more than sure that if you put anyone in an agricultural environment, they'd reject chemicals. It's no wonder working on tractors, applying pesticides, is considered harmful."

"— Organic products are in high demand now. Everywhere, except here. Because people aren't ready to pay for it."

There you have it! The opinion of someone who knows what they're talking about.

And people in general—they understand too! And I hope more people will become aware of this. But we want to solve this issue here and now, not just eat whatever.

From afar, reading about it—it seems distant. Like an abstraction, not about you personally. But when you see it in person, as she said, "…It was frightening when after treatment some cloud drifted into the forest, and then burns were clearly visible on the leaves of the trees...", you really want a solution right now.

But how?!

Chapter 38. Superprofits and the living Earth

I've long wanted to write something to explain my point, which not everyone seems to understand. The fact is, the Russian Taiga is being destroyed using inefficient, outdated technologies. We're constantly told by government officials and the media that the economy is what matters. Economy, economy! What can you do, we cut! And we'll keep cutting and cutting: we're doing it for you! It's the economy: what will you eat, where will you get your paycheck if we stop the logging?! Well, this is probably the biggest and most brazen lie!

In reality, a given hectare of the Russian Taiga, when managed with proper forestry practices, can generate significantly more money than it does now. Attention! This is while maintaining the volume of timber harvesting and simultaneously without harming the ecosystems! Specialists know this. The foundation for such technologies was laid about 50 years ago. There are modern methods and technologies that haven't been applied to forestry but can certainly be used. I'm talking

about information technologies, computers, information systematization, and so on.

So what's the issue? If there's a way to make significantly more money without harm, why isn't it being used?! Hard to believe, right, that such idiocy is possible?! It's simple: it's not the idiocy of the managers, but deliberate actions. The whole question is what is being done and in whose interests.

Proper, planned forestry management implies a strategic interest. Looking ahead, many years into the future. This is possible through the efforts of many people. Specialists are needed, which means they must know their section of the taiga. Live in the taiga. And not just them, but their families too. Due to technological necessity, this will involve many small and medium-sized enterprises.

Not only logging, but also the collection and processing of wild plants, growing seedlings, and so on. The ecosystem of the Russian Taiga produces many useful things for humans! It's not just commercial timber! The overall profit from such multifaceted forestry management is much greater than from the inefficient, predatory logging we see now! One nuance is that this profit is distributed among many small enterprises.

"Big money" aims to become much, much bigger in the shortest possible time. The timber industry giants are interested in tactical results: getting the maximum profit as quickly as possible. They take as large a section of the Russian Taiga as they can. The bigger it is, the cheaper it is per unit area. This is a huge sum all at once, even for the authorities. Even if such a deal is done legally and not for millions in bribes, the authorities are willing to offer huge discounts for an immediate large sum of money. And they sell a "piece of the homeland" for next to nothing for total clear-cutting. Then heavy, powerful machinery is brought in. Everything is quickly mowed down, quickly sold. Workers are needed only temporarily, on a rotational basis. There's no need to care about specialists, train them, or think about a permanent life for their families. They grab the cash and leave. Lots of money. And fast! Next time, they run the same scheme, but in a different place. The fact that commercial timber is only 20% of the useful bioproductivity of a taiga plot doesn't matter. The fact that for a pittance today, they've destroyed the future of the entire area doesn't matter. The current situation is such that all accessible forests have already been cleared. Those with roads, those that are closer. And with this same predatory, extensive scheme of

established actions, they rush into untouched, protected areas.

That's how everything is set up. Not all economies are the same! I write books about old times, about the Vikings. Let me give you an illustration from ancient times.

A city stands on the shore of a great sea, on a river. Trade happens near the docks. And there are bustling merchants and rows of craft workshops. People live in abundance, the fields around the city are plowed. There's plenty of livestock, and they also bring in spoils from the forests: fox and sable furs are plentiful at the market.

And then, a large band came raiding. They burned everything, robbed everyone: the city guards couldn't hold them off. They loaded their longships full of gold, silver, and furs, and set sail. What can you do? Viking luck!

So tell me, what portion of the region's economic potential did the invaders seize? And what part of the economy did they simply destroy? And what should be done with the city leader who let these guys in for a small bribe on a dark night, granting them a "concession of non-plunder"?

That's how it is. And they're trying to sell us on the value of a predatory, aggressive economy! Like, look: 100 gold coins will go into the treasury. Well, it's obvious that 10,000 gold coins will be taken away on the longships. But what do we get out of it?

I've repeatedly written in my materials that the current logging practices are economically flawed. Proper forest management could bring in significantly more money. And I'm not even talking about environmental protection—just pure financial interest! But there's no such well-established management system. There's nothing to show as an example. So, let's look at similar processes happening outside the Russian Taiga.

Voronezh Oblast. The Black Earth Region. One of the areas that serves as the breadbasket of our country. Developed agriculture. It provides food for the entire nation and income for all the residents of the region. Since 2012, local residents have been protesting against nickel mining here.

In May 2012, the Federal Agency for Subsoil Use held a competition for the right to use the Yelansk and Yelkinsk subsoil plots, which contain copper-nickel ores, located in the Novokhopersk district of Voronezh Oblast. The winner was LLC Mednogorsk Copper-Sulfur Plant,

owned by JSC Ural Mining and Metallurgical Company.

In July 2012, the LLC received licenses for geological study, exploration, and extraction of copper-nickel ores.

The Elanskoye and Elkinskoye ore deposits have been known since the 1960s. However, up to the present time, no decision has been made to develop them due to the region's agro-industrial profile, the complexity of the mineral deposits, and the proximity of protected natural areas. They really took care of the land back then!

Since 2012, for almost 10 years now, ordinary people have been coming together to fight for their homeland. Yet, they just can't seem to fend off the invaders! How could they not stand up for their land when it's their provider? It feeds them, it fed their grandparents and great-grandparents! And it will feed their children, if they don't let it be ruined and defiled. The locals understand this well because they are the locals.

But who is so eager to build industrial production that's unsafe for the land, and why?

"The development of the Elansky and Elkinsky deposits SATISFIES THE INTERESTS OF A GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS WHO OWN COMPANIES LOCATED IN CYPRUS AND THE BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS, which own the Ural Mining and Metallurgical Company. The

majority of nickel extracted in Russia is exported: only about 3–5% of the volume extracted in recent years remains in the country. THE PROFITS FROM METAL SALES GO TO PRIVATE COMPANIES, WHILE THE ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE FROM EXTRACTION FALLS ON THE SHOULDERS OF THE STATE FOR MANY YEARS TO COME." (From the website of the Movement for the Defense of Khopra. More details are available on their site. People have been working for many years to defend their land. Numerous scientific studies are available, among others.)

Again, what I wrote about the Russian Taiga: it's the economy of a Viking raid! Everything is exactly the same!

One of the comments on the movement's website seemed the most interesting to me. I'll quote it almost in full, even though it's lengthy.

«Sem

12.06.2012

I want to offer my version of an answer to the eternal Russian question, "What is to be done?"

To start, I'll present a few interesting figures:

According to the statistical report from the Administration of the Voronezh Region, "The gross harvest of main agricultural crops in 2011 amounted to: grain — 3,047.5 thousand metric tons in weight after processing, sugar beets — 6,991.6 thousand metric tons; sunflowers — 1,001.6 thousand metric tons," and in livestock farming, "Meat production in sales amounted to 300.1 thousand metric tons or 109.2% compared to the previous year and 100% of the plan. Milk production was 708.1 thousand metric tons or 103.6% compared to the previous year (the planned target was 711.0 thousand metric tons)."

Notice that I left out a whole range of agricultural sectors for which I simply can't find any information. So, if you calculate, the annual turnover for Voronezh farmers is about 3.5 billion rubles from milk, 39 billion rubles from meat, 11 billion from sunflower and vegetable oil, 20 billion rubles from beets (including processing into sugar), and about 15 billion rubles from grains. In total, the annual turnover of the agricultural sector in the Voronezh region is about 88 billion rubles (including processing enterprises). There is no data here on potatoes, vegetables, and many other crops. Note that in 100% of cases, this is a well-established business, generating profits and taxes for the budgets of the

region and districts.

What will nickel give us? There are approximately 1,800 thousand metric tons of nickel reserves. Mining is planned for 30 years. At the current price of nickel, $17,000 per metric ton, the annual turnover would be about 30 billion rubles, assuming the full production cycle was located here. But we will only have extraction and enrichment. So, this figure will be lower (by how much—I don't know). Now let's calculate how much tax from this figure will end up in the regional budget if the mining company is de facto registered in Cyprus?

So, will we lose money or not? After all, no one doubts (and for those who do, I'm ready to prove the position) that at least a third of the established agricultural business will simply collapse after the nickel mine starts operating."

Super! That's exactly what I'm talking about in relation to the Russian Taiga. But I don't have examples of well-established forestry. And here—it's a clear example from real life. Quick, one-time profit for one invader—against the interests of the well-established agriculture of an entire region. In the region's agriculture alone, there are dozens, hundreds of agricultural producers and processors. And hundreds of thousands of ordinary

people. But "Big Business" couldn't care less about them—all they want is money, and more money! As fast as possible and as much as possible.

88 billion rubles a year, already guaranteed to feed many people—versus maybe 30 billion rubles a year, but "for one fat cat."

Here, an objective, concrete situation in a specific place. And a clear illustration of how and why ECONOMICALLY UNFAVORABLE decisions are made. Our economies are just different: we, the ordinary people, mean the economy of our regions. But they replace it with the economy of a predatory raid by "outside interests."

Chapter 39. The curse of wealth

“We have no land we can call our own.”

This is a quote from the appeal of the residents of Kuzbass.

“We, the residents of the Russian Federation, Kemerovo region, city of Kiselyovsk, wish to openly address the honorable Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, and the Secretary-General of the UN, António Guterres.

As of today, in Russia, particularly in Kuzbass, the living conditions have become unbearable. The fact is, our region is rich in coal…”

Again, slowly, syllable by syllable! Otherwise, I can barely understand the meaning of the statement.

…the living conditions have become unbearable… the fact is, our region is rich…

Our region is rich, and because of this, we have unbearable living conditions?!!

And yet, it’s true! In many regions of our country, unbearable living conditions arise precisely because of the natural wealth of the territories. Many areas of the country are becoming ecological disaster zones. Not only the residents of Kiselyovsk are ready to declare themselves “environmental refugees.” There are many such places in the country from which people would flee if they could. Those who can, leave. But many can’t afford to. No money, no jobs. Real estate in such troubled places is cheap. But even so, no one wants to buy it there. Selling it for next to nothing is almost impossible.

Kuzbass — the Kuznetsk Coal Basin. Coal from the Novokuznetsk region is mainly supplied to the same China. Although the PRC changed its priorities in 2014, abandoning the construction of new coal plants, demand remains, which means gigantic profits continue. Corporations extract resources without regard for anything. Nor the destruction of nature.

Nor the high morbidity and mortality rates caused by environmental problems. Nor the population itself: who needs them? As usual, the sheriff doesn’t care about the Indians’ problems! The local population is always dissatisfied. Do you think the people of the port city of Nakhodka, from where Kuzbass coal is shipped to Japan,

Korea, and China, are thrilled with the environmental situation? They're dissatisfied too! But what do they decide? Nothing.

"We have no land we can call our own."

This can be said about many regions of our country. Only corporations profit from the land's wealth. And the government diligently serves the interests of these corporations. And the people — just the same "waste rock," nothing more… Maybe the Canadian government will hear? Because it seems impossible to reach our own government!

So who and why is trying to portray Siberia as bankrupt?

I don't know the exact answer to this question. Although, I have some assumptions. Let's, dear readers, together trace the logic of some events.

From school, we remember Lomonosov saying that the Russian state would grow with Siberia. And even now, the immeasurable wealth of Siberia is not forgotten. Hydrocarbons, minerals, forests of the Siberian taiga, lands for agricultural production. They dig into everything! They get gigantic profits, don't they?! And yet, the population of Siberia is decreasing.

People receive low wages, the social infrastructure is destroyed. This is churned over in the press, chewed over. They talk about the harsh climatic conditions making production unprofitable. Agriculture, supposedly, is catastrophically unprofitable. They say that due to remoteness, high transportation costs, goods from Siberia are uncompetitive.

And you know what this resembles? This is how enterprises were taken over during perestroika. Ownership documents for part of the enterprise (vouchers) were issued by the state to all workers. Directors stopped work, deliberately dismantled production. They didn't pay salaries to people for years. And they bought these very vouchers through intermediaries. And, voila, at one fine moment, such a director became the full owner of the enterprise, having bought the voucher shares from everyone. And it turned out that the enterprise was not unprofitable at all. Immediately, having acquired such a takeover-owner, it became very profitable. This, only on a global scale, seems to be happening now in Siberia.

The presence of natural wealth is a fact. No one even tries to dispute it. They only downplay its value, devalue it. Like, expensive transportation. Transportation to where? If you take the rapidly developing countries of

Southeast Asia, they’re nearby! On the contrary, it’s right next door, not shipping to Europe: that’s cheap transportation!

Local businesses are being destroyed. It's not just small businesses, but medium-sized ones too. Look: corporations are being introduced into the market on preferential terms, without any competition, through administrative orders. The justification is that these resources (lands, forests, or mineral deposits) are supposedly not needed by anyone. They're not in demand. No one is capable of developing them, they say. This is a blatant, outright lie. Why then distribute them without competition? The truth is that even a fairly large local enterprise cannot stand up to a corporation. Especially when that corporation is working in tandem with the authorities, simply using administrative acts to claim whatever it wants.

This is the curse of Siberia's wealth. It seems that life for people in Siberia is difficult not because of natural or climatic factors. It appears that the local population is being deliberately "squeezed out," creating life difficulties for them.

Terrible cold, impossible agricultural production? Let's take a quick glance at the latest news.

June 8, 2019, BFM.RU, "A Chinese company will become one of the largest landowners in the Russian Far East."

> "JBA Holdings is investing nearly 10 billion rubles in the region's agriculture. Should we be wary of the influence of the Middle Kingdom, and is this agreement beneficial for Russia? JBA Holdings plans to plant 50,000 hectares with grains and legumes and build its own processing plant."

The land, as usual, holds the legal status of "not quite ownership, but almost": a million-year lease with the right to evict the natives. But don't worry! The natives probably won't suffer! They'll disperse on their own. Those who don't die off...

The next news item.

June 10, 2019, ludidv.ru, "Two 'meat' projects recognized as priorities in the Khabarovsk region."

"Two agricultural projects were recognized as priorities at the latest meeting of the investment council in the Government of the Khabarovsk region. For their implementation, the companies SHP 'Kolos' and 'Green Star-2' will be able to obtain land plots without bidding."

..."Green Star-2' will create pig farming and meat processing complexes for 240 million rubles."

Let's look at the registry of legal entities. It's still open. The founder of 'Green Star-2' is one individual, Hwan In Sun. The general director is Guk Sun Chan.

Further comments are unnecessary.

Just a couple of fresh news items. What an "unprofitable" and "unviable" piece of land, being snapped up by the millions of hectares! This isn't due to bribes. This isn't corruption. These are lawful actions by the authorities. No discrimination, by the way. As a Russian citizen, any of us can apply for our own 1 hectare. The 'Far Eastern Hectare' program is still in effect!

Chapter 40. China, mon amour?

Little studies of big politics

My opinion. I’m not forcing it on anyone. But for those who haven’t thought about it, it’s worth a look.

April 26. The international forum “One Belt, One Road.” The event is dedicated to the Chinese projects “The Silk Road Economic Belt” and “The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.” The President of Russia visited China on a two-day working trip.

June 5. Chinese leader Xi Jinping, accompanied by an entourage of 1000 people, arrived in Moscow for a full three days. He then headed to the International Economic Forum in St. Petersburg.

The media reported that the leaders of Russia and China "compared their friendship." The media wrote that "...Vladimir Putin arrived in Beijing as a president and will leave as a doctor. Not a medical doctor, but a scholar. More precisely, the holder of an honorary academic degree. The solemn ceremony of awarding the diploma to the Russian leader took place in the capital of

China." And there I was, reading it over: "Arrived as the President of a Great Country, and will leave as a doctor..." WHAT?!!

There was a time when Comrade Mao flew to Moscow. He sat at some government dacha, waiting, poor guy. Wondering when Comrade Stalin would call him in. And he didn't even know if he'd be flying back to his own country at all. Now, the media reports that our President was half an hour late for a meeting with the Pope, but never allows himself to be late for meetings with Chinese leadership. "Kindergarten, pants with suspenders," of course. But that's "Big Politics" for you. That's how they show each other a position of strength—a position of weakness.

And now, in Russian-Chinese relations, it's China that demonstrates the position of strength. Even ordinary citizens of the country see this. The global media writes about it. Why is this happening?

China's share in Russian foreign trade has almost doubled over the past five years. It now accounts for one-fifth of Russia's foreign trade turnover. Just last year, trade increased by nearly a quarter, reaching $108 billion. Let me reiterate: this is my opinion! These relations are NOT equal and NOT a partnership. The

terms on which agreements are made are essentially exploitative for Russia. China only needs us as a supplier of cheap raw materials; Russia holds no significant role in Chinese exports.

Significant, at least. Which can't be said about us—after all, China is critically necessary for our authorities as an investor. Everything is just "investment projects" and TFETs. China finances everything. They need roads, railways, the Northern Sea Route. And Europe will become closer for China, transport cheaper. An obvious benefit for China, and not a very obvious benefit for our country. And only this traffic through our territories, as I understand it, serves as the subject of some kind of bargaining. In everything else, China takes an obviously tough negotiating position. They squeeze the maximum for themselves.

"It's a shame for the state!" Both a quote from the classic Soviet film "White Sun of the Desert" and my own opinion. Completely and utterly an emotional opinion! What else could it be?! The fact that the destruction of the Russian Taiga and the degradation of territories during their industrial development are justified by the interests of economic development is known not only to me. Everyone hears this. All the media have such materials. Officials at all levels constantly repeat it.

"Jobs, salaries for you, ungrateful ones! Blah-blah-blah!" Only in the existing economic model of society, all the benefits go to large companies. In the case of China, these are companies with centralized control from one center—I don't believe it for a penny that they are independent. I just saw "territorial development" with my own eyes. It is, to put it mildly, ambiguous. Our small and medium businesses are closing down, unable to compete with the multinational "big shots." Salaries remain low, there's not enough work, and those who can try to leave. That's how it is.

On July 17, "AiF" published an extensive interview with Foreign Minister Lavrov. A direct question and answer from a competent official of our country. I'm publishing it in full.

"Will Siberia and the Far East become Chinese?"

"Recently, Chinese media have started calling Siberia 'Chinese land.' Currently, about 12 million Chinese people live in the Far East and Siberia. Could it be that in the near future, Siberia and the Far East might actually become Chinese?" (Georgy Gorodetsky)

— The Russian-Chinese border issue has long been and definitively resolved. The absence of territorial claims is documented in the bilateral Treaty of Good-

Neighborliness, Friendship, and Cooperation from 2001. Against this backdrop, attempts to spin the myth of a "Chinese threat" are the work of those who are unsettled by the constructive development of Russian-Chinese relations.

Regarding the supposed 12 million Chinese living in the Far East and Siberia, the accuracy of this figure is highly questionable. The fears associated with it are clearly exaggerated. The course taken by Russia and China to strengthen good neighborliness is multifaceted and long-term, not subject to market fluctuations. Russian-Chinese cooperation is not directed against anyone. Its main purpose is to promote the socio-economic development and prosperity of our countries and peoples.

As noted by V. Putin and Xi Jinping following the talks held on June 5 in Moscow, the comprehensive partnership and strategic interaction between the two states are entering a new era of development. The positive dynamics of the bilateral dialogue are eloquently evidenced by the deepening mutual trust in the military-political sphere, record growth in trade turnover, expansion of cultural and humanitarian contacts, and strengthened coordination with Beijing in international affairs.

A fresh statement from the most competent government official!

First question:

Either I don't understand something, or Mr. Lavrov said: "The absence of territorial claims is recorded in the bilateral Treaty on Good-Neighborliness, Friendship, and Cooperation of 2001."

But on Wikipedia, I read: "The demarcation of the Russian-Chinese border took place in 2005. As a result of establishing the interstate border along the center of the Amur River, China received several territories totaling 337 km² — a piece of land in the area of Bolshoy Island (the upper reaches of the Argun River in the Chita region) and two areas near the Tarabarov and Bolshoy Ussuriysky Islands at the confluence of the Amur and Ussuri Rivers."

In 2001 there were no claims, but in 2005, 337 square kilometers were transferred? I'm not talking about the insignificant area of a few hundred square kilometers, I'm talking about the essence.

Second question:

If industrial zones of one country are created on the territory of another country. If transportation corridors of railways, highways, and sea routes are controlled by

another country. If forests and agricultural lands are leased for 49 years to another country. Then what is this? Is it your own country nominally, legally? Here's my house. The kitchen is leased to Vasya for 49 years, and the bedroom too. The electrical and plumbing in the house belong to LLC "Vasya," which, in turn, belongs to Vasya.

Because LLC "Vasya" installed all these utilities. I didn't have the money to do it myself. So whose house is it, in all honesty? Mine or Vasya's? I understand that if I handed over the utilities to some random guy and leased the premises to him, then I've essentially demoted myself from "owner" to "tenant." Or am I misunderstanding something again? What I do understand for sure is that on a personal level, I have no desire to lease the premises in my house to Vasya for 49 years and transfer ownership of the utilities to him. Especially if I plan to live in my own house.

Chapter 41. Birds and insects of the Russian Taiga

There are many birds. All of them are beneficial to the forest, each having its own place in the complex biological system. And today, the number of all birds has decreased. Many are already endangered. Only crows and magpies have adapted to human society. Do you want a world where only crows remain among the birds? You look out the window in the morning, and there are flocks of crows circling over the dump. Yeah, and instead of small forest animals, only gray rats have "humanized." They come up to the house: "Hello, master! What's for breakfast?" — it's written right on their little faces.

Of course, I'm exaggerating. I hope such a grim world will never come to be. But representatives of big business are working hard to create it, first and foremost. They have enormous influence in government. The only thing holding back this process is public opinion. The only tool people have to influence power is scandal; the authorities really don't want mass

discontent.

As I started to delve into the issues of mass deforestation in our country, I stumbled upon related problems. It turned out that the number of forest birds and their species diversity is much less than what researchers described in the last century. It's noticeable even with superficial observation, at first glance to a non-specialist. And this indicates a decrease (a sharp decrease, in fact!) in the entire Russian Taiga's ability to adapt to human impact.

This is the decline of the immune and protective functions of forests. All forests, even those considered "healthy," where there are no mass cuttings! If people started talking about mass cuttings many years ago, the problem was formulated. At least people, society, are aware of it. There is an opportunity to look for solutions. But only certain specialists know about the serious importance of birds. Ordinary people are unaware. You walk into the forest, birds are singing. It's nice. The air is fresh after the city, everything is wonderful. There's nothing to compare it to, except the city. And even there, now and then, you might see a titmouse or a bullfinch, besides pigeons. And I thought the same way not long ago. There was simply nothing to compare it to! As I became familiar with written sources from past

years, I began to notice discrepancies. The number of birds counted, clearly recorded by ornithologists per unit area. Just descriptions by nature enthusiasts. Everything is different! There are no "large flocks," "the tapping of dozens of woodpeckers," or "a forest filled with continuous chatter" even at first glance.

This is very serious. Birds, like the formed elements of our blood, carry plant seeds over long distances and destroy forest pests where outbreaks of insect spread occur, damaging trees. The taiga stands still, but birds are mobile, like our blood. They fly to the affected area, just as lymphocytes flow to the site of inflammation in our body. A decrease in the number of birds — lymphocytes indicates that the organism of the Russian Taiga is not coping. The disease is systemic, chronic. Externally, it's not very noticeable. But a blood test, where the number of immune bodies drops sharply, would horrify a doctor.

I publish methodological guides on how we can help the birds of our forests. And I understand that they are not complete. This is just the beginning of researching the problem. But we need to act now! With small personal efforts, we can at least preserve the species diversity of forest birds in certain areas. That's already something! The efforts of one person can save an entire unique

species of forest birds! Or even several species.

Chapter 42. Insect extinction — another symptom of sick ecosystems

I encountered the mass death of bees in Altai.

And not just in Altai, friends! This is a syndrome, a phenomenon that shows how sick our Mother Earth is! It's the weakening of the immune forces of our entire planet. It started long ago. It reached our country several years back.

Altai is traditionally a “honey” region. Both the Altai Krai, with its forest-steppe and foothills, and the Mountain Altai. The legend is Altai honey! And just as I arrived here, acquaintances told me that a large apiary of theirs had died. Completely. Before this, two years ago, bees began dying en masse in the same way. Previously, this process would start and then subside. At the same time, I encountered the same in correspondence about the Ryazan land.

The mass death of bees started again in our country this summer, 2019. Beekeepers even sent an appeal to the “direct line” with Vladimir Putin regarding the mass death of bees in more than ten regions of Russia. Currently, the most affected are: the Republic of Mordovia, Kursk, Bryansk, Voronezh, Lipetsk, Saratov, Ryazan, Ulyanovsk, and Nizhny Novgorod regions.

There are also problems in Buryatia and Altai. After discussions among beekeepers on social media, an open appeal appeared to the Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation with a request to “legally consider and stop the mass poisoning of bees.” The authors of the appeal write that “a real ecological disaster has begun in the country.” They point out that in Central Russia: “The results of examinations show that the death of bees was caused by pesticide poisoning.”

I understand, for many people connected with beekeeping, this is a problem. And sometimes a personal tragedy. Like now with my acquaintances, who lost everything in an instant. But, most likely, the president, the government, or the Ministry of Agriculture can't help with anything.

THE MASS DEATH OF BEES IS A DISEASE OF THE WHOLE EARTH!

It's a symptom that the biosphere as a whole really can't withstand! I write about this constantly. I wrote about the mass extinction of birds as a symptom of the destruction of biocenoses. Yes, some solutions can be made by ministries. But the problem is bigger! THERE IS AN URGENT NEED FOR THE ALLOCATION OF GLOBAL “TRANQUILITY ZONES” ON A PLANETARY SCALE! Zones where biodiversity can be preserved: this is already critically important.

Existing reserves are not enough! We need global zones where economic activity is conducted, but only 100% eco! In our country, such zones could be the Greater Altai, parts of the Russian North. The Amur region — maybe. Those territories where natural biosystems have not yet been irreversibly disrupted. Really, it's time to talk about the fact that such territories (and there are few!) need to be PRESERVED AT ANY COST!

Now, I'll briefly explain what mass bee death is and its scale worldwide.

Colony Collapse Disorder is a phenomenon characterized by the simultaneous and irreversible abandonment of the hive by a family of honeybees.

The syndrome was first described in 2006 in the United States. According to the World Bee Protection Fund, every winter in the U.S., 30–35% of bee colonies die. Since 1961, the number of American bees has halved, and the number of bees per hectare has decreased by 90%.

The situation is already being called a “global biological catastrophe.” In the U.S., over the past ten years, 90% of the wild bee population and 80% of the domestic bee population have died. Scientists say the cause of death is a whole complex of factors — from mite infestations to drastic climate changes and intensive chemical use in fields. The only solution to the problem, at least for pollination and saving agriculture from collapse, is bumblebee farms, a new industry in the U.S.

Subsequently, the same was observed in several European countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, France, the Netherlands, Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. To a lesser extent in Switzerland and Germany. In Northern Ireland in 2009, there were reports of a double reduction in the bee population. Overall, Europe loses 20% of bee colonies each year, and a similar trend is beginning to appear in Latin America and Asia. In 2018, France was forced to allocate 3 million euros to those affected by this problem.

Now, special attention: the causes of this phenomenon have not yet been determined! Bees die from pesticides and herbicides, a proven fact. Bees are also killed by nosema, European foulbrood, American foulbrood, 19 strains of viruses that have not yet been learned to treat, as well as hypothermia (especially in winter, during frosts). There are suggestions that the cause of the phenomenon may also be radiation from cell towers or an unknown infection.

In reality, it's a syndrome caused by the combination of all these factors. Cybernetics and systems theory tell us this. The system is overloaded: it doesn't matter which factor acts as the "trigger" at any given moment! The planet's biological system is truly on the brink, and bees, birds—they are the visible "death of the immune system"!

Our world is unified. It's one big living organism. The mass death of insects, small birds, or fish in a stream is an indicator of the entire organism's condition. Attention—immune bodies are dying! And the death of complexes of soil bacteria and fungi hasn't even been properly noted by scientists: they're too small and inconspicuous. Yet they are the foundation of the entire organism, which we've already disrupted with our technological "conquest of nature."

But take the example of bees. The problem of mass bee deaths has just emerged in our country. Right now, in the summer of 2019. America and Europe faced this a few years before us. And there's no solution, none found yet. Articles and materials about this are in all the media. Everything is documented, recognized by government bodies. One hundred percent reality, no exaggerations or "fakes"! And now there is data from large-scale analyses, laboratory studies.

So, why are bees dying en masse now? Rosselkhoznadzor blames the Ministry of Economic Development for losing control over pesticides. Regional authorities in the Black Earth regions, not waiting for federal intervention, have started investigating the problem and searching for solutions. On their own! To determine the causes of insect deaths, Rosselkhoznadzor staff in the Belgorod region examined 101 samples of dead bees from 98 beekeepers in the Belgorod, Voronezh, Kursk, Tambov, and Lipetsk regions. They also studied plants grown in cultivated fields that bees pollinate. The Belgorod laboratory is considered one of the best, so they began conducting research across all Black Earth regions. In 73 samples of dead bees, residual amounts of active pesticide ingredients (fipronil, dimethoate, cypermethrin, lambda-cyhalothrin)

were found. Residual amounts of pesticides were also detected in plant samples. Research is ongoing, with new samples being taken. Experts have concluded that the mass bee deaths are due to poisoning.

The head of the veterinary department of the Kursk region, Sergey Turnaev, states that bee deaths have been recorded in 15 municipalities: "A total of 227 beekeepers have contacted us, with 5,800 bee colonies lost. The main cause of death is the treatment of fields with chemicals, primarily organophosphates, to combat harmful insects." According to estimates by Kursk authorities, the direct material damage has already exceeded 20 million.

As you can see, even government agencies are not sitting idle. It's a real disaster for agricultural regions. All regions! We live in one world; municipal borders don't protect against the destruction of biological systems! Scientific research shows the same data not only throughout the Black Earth region but also in Siberia and beyond our Motherland! The mass death of bees this summer, 2019, was recorded in Bashkiria, Udmurtia, Mari El, the Altai Territory, and so on.

Let's take a closer look at what's happening and how it affects each of us. Each of us! Not just beekeepers or farmers, but every city dweller too!

Pesticides are chemical agents used to combat pests and plant diseases, as well as various parasites, weeds, grain and grain product pests, wood, cotton, wool, leather products, ectoparasites of domestic animals, and carriers of dangerous diseases in humans and animals.

The concept of pesticides includes the following groups of such agents: herbicides, which destroy weeds; insecticides, which destroy harmful insects; fungicides, which destroy pathogenic fungi; zoocides, which destroy harmful warm-blooded animals, and so on. Most pesticides are poisons that target organisms, but they also include sterilizers (substances that cause infertility) and growth inhibitors (which suppress growth). Pesticides are also called toxic chemicals, but the concept of pesticides encompasses this definition, as it broadly includes a wide range of chemical plant protection agents.

Herbicides are chemical substances used to destroy vegetation. Based on their effect on plants, they are divided into non-selective herbicides, which kill all types of plants, and selective herbicides, which target certain

plant species without harming others. The former are used to eliminate vegetation around industrial sites, in forest clearings, at airfields, along railways and highways, under high-voltage power lines, in drainage channels, ponds, and lakes; the latter are used to protect cultivated plants from weeds (chemical weeding).

This is a definition of terms from Wikipedia. I'll add that the words themselves contain the root "caedo"—"to kill." These are fundamentally poisons that kill living organisms at the cellular level. They are divided into those that kill insects or plants quite conditionally: they kill everything alive. It's just that insecticides kill cockroaches better than they do humans. But they also kill humans: honestly, cockroach poison is not recommended for human consumption!

And we eat this stuff. According to WHO data, almost 85% of all vegetables and fruits come into contact with various pesticides in one way or another. As you can imagine, these are official figures — meaning cautious, “at least,” what cannot be denied. What actually ends up in agricultural products is unknown. There is no system of total control, no analysis of each batch of products anywhere in the world.

Currently, in Russia, more than 900 different types of pesticides are officially registered for use against weeds, pests, and so on.

So, what happened now, in 2019? The death of bees has become so massive and widespread across all regions of the country that it immediately caught the attention of the authorities and was highlighted in all the media.

Why did it “explode” now, if pesticides are nothing new: all these poisons have been used for many years? There are several reasons:

1. “Accumulated environmental risk” or bioaccumulation. Where do you think the poisons used for many years end up? Some in groundwater and rivers. Some in the fruits, leaves, or seeds of plants. We buy this in stores and eat it. Either directly, or through meat or milk. The majority remains in the soil. The concentration increases year by year.

2. The development of large agribusiness and the lack of government control. The agricultural market is becoming consolidated and monopolized. The goal is profit. The task of creating a viable biological system, producing clean products, is not even considered. The land is used to exhaustion, with the aim of maximizing profit right now. Farms that operate “the old-fashioned

way," with manure and crop rotation, become truly uncompetitive. With "big chemistry," the cost of production is lower.

As a result, traditional farming is dying, and industrial production is expanding. Meanwhile, the companies producing these chemicals are international giants. They successfully lobby for their interests, pay for "safety" assessments of their products, and fund laws to increase the maximum allowable concentrations of harmful substances. And there is a catastrophic shortage of state laboratories. Moreover, they have been stripped of much of their control rights by laws in recent years.

As for Chinese companies, more and more are entering our market. Based on expedition results, I saw firsthand in the Far East that the agricultural sector is their primary interest. Comprehensive investment contracts are being signed for both industrial development and the construction of processing plants. But first and foremost, it's soy, etc. Large volumes, leasing agricultural land for 49 years or subleasing, contracts with our enterprises.

It's all about "intensive technologies": chemicals, pesticides. Profit is needed! Whoever I tried to ask, whichever specialists I talked to—they all agree that

"industrial production technology" is profitable and used. But exactly what chemicals are applied, no one really knows. And our regulatory bodies often don't even have the legal right to control anything. In my view, it looks like this: anyone can come, do whatever they want—the main thing is to "kick back some cash."

In general, we're sprinkling something on Mother Earth. Sometimes the bags with this "something" have hieroglyphs, sometimes "Monsanto Company. Made in USA." I'm exaggerating, of course. I know that Monsanto's poisons are packaged in our country, with Russian labeling. And I have no specific complaints against "Chinese comrades." I don't care if it's "Agent Orange," which was used to kill Vietnamese like cockroaches, or an "innovative development." And I don't care who, where, and how much profits from it. The bees, well, they died. And I somehow don't feel like eating this stuff. Feeding it to the kids — even less so.

What can be done? What can we, ordinary people, do to avoid following the bees down the path of extinction?

1. Speak openly about problems. Don't allow information to be suppressed.

This is important, and it works. When I started the Russian Taiga project, many people wrote that "it's all fake, our taiga is boundless and there are no problems with deforestation." Now even the authorities have acknowledged the issues. Changes are happening, corrupt officials are being prosecuted, and control is being established. Things are improving, albeit slowly. Public opinion cannot be ignored!

Our society is just as much a living organism as the biosphere as a whole. Many people are indifferent and passive. And we, friends and fellow supporters, act as the receptors, the nerve cells of our society. We say, "It hurts! This can't go on!" This is the first step toward change. Problems need to be recognized and spoken about out loud. Only then will they be addressed.

2. Don't give up and say, "It's all hopeless." The world is changing, and we have the power to create these changes!

Once again, I return to point one: first, a public demand! "Negroes" must declare that slavery is unacceptable—only then will slavery first be abolished, and later slaveholding will become a criminal offense!

3. We need to create global "green zones."

I've seen our great country from end to end. And I'm increasingly thinking that even slightly damaged ecosystems are not that plentiful. Completely undamaged, untouched by human activity, don't exist at all. In distant mountains and reserves, it rains. Winds blow over them, bringing factory smoke. Airplanes fly overhead.

"Ecological awareness" is awakening in people. Changes are happening, even laws are slowly evolving. But on one hand, this is happening very slowly. And on the other hand, there's fierce resistance from those who profit from destroying nature. They have money and power on their side. We're really at risk of losing everything. Accessible forests have been cut down—they're encroaching on reserves, sanctuaries, and remote areas. Old agricultural areas have been ruined, Mother Earth wounded—they're "developing" new ones. It's like this everywhere!

Designating special "green zones" with a special ecological status could help. It's easier to push through such a legislative decision than, for example, a complete ban on pesticides. Mega-business monsters won't allow a total ban. But they might accept zones where the use of chemicals is prohibited, under public pressure.

The idea is, of course, "raw."

My readers have already sent me links to similar plots in science fiction works with "zones for select wealthy individuals" in a grim techno-dystopian future.

Right now, it's not too late to create "green zones" that would benefit all citizens. After deforestation, I became acquainted with issues of landfills, household and industrial waste. With agriculture. I saw what industrial agriculture is like in different regions of our country. And I saw that ecological farming is completely uncompetitive compared to "chemically intensive" farming. And what's the point of working without pesticides when your neighbor sprays his field from a plane with that stuff?

And the breeze will bring some to you, and the bees will fly to his field and yours, and then they'll die. I started forming the idea of global "green zones." I don't see another option! Only on large territories can we legally ban industrial practices! Then truly clean eco-products could be produced there. They would sell for more, making this type of agriculture profitable. Right now, for urban consumers, the "eco" brand doesn't always guarantee that it's truly eco. Often it's just regular industrial agriculture under the "eco" brand, nothing

more.

I presented this idea of "green zones" to local residents where such zones could potentially be. And I can say that people understood me perfectly and liked the idea. It's wrong for officials to occasionally call people idiots who only need supervision and control. That's far from true! People understand the value of clean water and air perfectly.

And they instantly grasp the competitive advantages of a guaranteed clean "green zone" for selling agricultural products. And they would like to engage in agriculture purely, as their grandfathers and great-grandfathers did. Especially since modern technology has long allowed any level of household comfort and access to any information via the internet anywhere on the planet.

The idea is "raw," but I don't see any alternatives. "Big business" is everywhere. Their appetites are limitless: no matter how much they consume, it's never enough. The current societal demand for eco-friendly products is already being exploited: the entire culture is turning into a society of complete value and concept substitution. I recently looked into Chinese agricultural enterprises. I found a couple of examples where products clearly full of chemicals and stimulants are

being sold not just as "eco" brands, but as health foods and dietary supplements.

"Today, the chemical market in Russia is free from control. A particular danger to people, animals, and insects comes from chemical aerial treatments of agricultural fields. Compounds toxic to many insects and hazardous to the health of animals, fish, and humans spread over vast areas, penetrating soil, water bodies, and plants"—this isn't some blogger's scare story. This is an official comment on the bee situation sent to "KP" by Rosselkhoznadzor.

The agency went on to talk about especially dangerous counterfeit chemicals entering Russia from Asia. Specifically, those based on glufosinate. "According to the European Food Safety Authority, this herbicide caused premature births, intrauterine death, and spontaneous abortions in test animals. Japanese researchers found it to be a cause of developmental delays and brain activity issues in humans," writes Rosselkhoznadzor.

This is from a "Komsomolskaya Pravda" article. A major federal media outlet sought clarification from a government agency, and they got an honest response!

"This isn't some blogger's scare story—this is an official comment on the situation!"

I'll add that there's no need to "play tricks" with "Asian countries"! Herbicide supplies come from China. They're lobbied for, promoted—this is Big Business! Yes, they're cheaper than chemicals from Europe or America. And so, because of the low price, they're chosen. Plus, the fields of Chinese farmers on our land. Plus, contracts between Chinese companies and our farmers: the Chinese buy all the products wholesale, and our producers are obliged to use their intensive technologies, with their chemicals. Plus, the spraying of forest land with the same chemicals against pests. Dangerous, destroying beneficial insects along with harmful ones, but again, lobbied for and used.

Again, quoting "KP": A competitors' conspiracy?

The bulk of counterfeit chemicals is imported from China. In some regions, the share of such pesticides reaches 30%. This led to suspicion: could it be that the Chinese want to deliberately ruin our agriculture? Specifically, beekeeping. All to fill the Russian market with their honey.

Sounds crazy, of course. Nevertheless, at the mention of the Chinese, our beekeepers start to get a bit jittery.

— In China, there's a special breed of bees—Apis cerana. They can't bring honey to the consistency we're used to. It turns out like syrup. And it's much cheaper, — Arnold Butov informed the "KP" correspondent. — This Chinese honey, by hook or by crook, ends up in Russia, mixed with ours to improve consistency—and sold here as real honey. Of course, it's cheaper. But the quality?!

Similar assumptions—like my "wild" ideas about global interest in our fires and floods, right? But if you look into it, at least some of these "conspiracy theories" are quite realistic! Specifically, the Chinese side is organized. Everything there is managed: no Chinese business would dare go against "party plans"! Assuming they plan 50 years ahead is more than realistic. Here, we have nothing but talk about "strategic initiatives." After seeing the SPECIAL interest in agriculture during an expedition to the Far East, I wouldn't be surprised by SPECIAL STRATEGIC PLANS.

I wanted to talk in detail about herbicides, but I feel like I'm running out of time. There's a lot to write, it's a separate and big topic. Look it up yourself if you're interested. Many of these substances are indistinguishable from chemical weapons—it's either that or almost that! Starting with the legendary Monsanto, "Agent Orange," and the poisoning of people

and nature in Vietnam. That was outright jungle genocide back then!

So why not have a conscious genocide of the Russian Taiga and us now?! Back then, Americans were defoliating tropical forests to deprive people of homes, lives, and habitats. That's a fact. After the Vietnam War, the term "ecocide" was defined, and the concept of conscious destruction of biocenosis for military purposes emerged. I don't know what kind of monsters in America thought of that back then. I know there are no fewer monsters in power in the world today. And I don't trust "Chinese comrades."

I started researching herbicides. The first thing I noticed was that many of them don't have safe concentrations. By law, there are "maximum allowable concentrations." But they're not safe! Many of these substances, mutagens, cause random changes in the genome, affecting what the organism passes on to its offspring. And secondly, many, if not most, herbicides impact the reproductive system.

The organism stops reproducing. "Chemical castration," failure to carry pregnancies, and so on. These methods were even developed specifically for insects, for example, to block reproduction. Why not call it

"chemical weapons of special strategic purpose"? In 50 years, there won't be any kids in the area of application, and the population will simply vanish.

As wild and fantastical as it may sound, no one hesitated to actually drop atomic bombs on Japan. And they deliberately poisoned the Vietnamese along with their jungles. So you start to wonder: did some creep decide to consider me a cockroach too?!

Chapter 43. Trash killing the biosphere

The federal value of trash.

A brief timeline of events unfolding before our eyes. Just the latest, from this year! A key moment, without a long backstory.

On January 14, 2019, the President of Russia signed a decree to create a company for developing a comprehensive system for managing solid municipal waste — the Russian Environmental Operator (REO).

The company was supposed to register in Moscow by April 14, 2019. And right now, before our very eyes, this ALL-RUSSIAN TRASH MONOPOLIST is taking real control over the existing regional trash monopolists. All the mass scandals on the “trash” theme are directly related to this. A so-called “state corporation” is being created. This time (and it’s not the first!), it’s a “trash state corporation.”

What are these “state corporations”? These structures are private, commercial entities where the capital of so-called “strategic investors” is poured in. But, at the same time, new laws are literally (!!!) written for such structures. So it’s unclear where the body of the state ends and the body of such a corporation begins. There’s a character in Korney Chukovsky’s “Doctor Aybolit” — “Pull-Push.”

A strange animal: it has heads on both sides. As a kid, I was always curious: this Pull-Push eats with two heads. It gobbles with two throats, from both sides, right? But if something goes in, it must come out, right? But Pull-Push doesn’t have a backside! None at all! What happens when it eats too much?!

And now, friends, I’m scared! What will happen when the hungry all-Russian “trash Pull-Push” gorges itself? Will it explode?! So, the nightmare and chaos with waste disposal we see now are just the beginning?!!

Of course, everything is justified by the need to improve the situation with the disposal of the growing stream of trash. There’s a planned increase in trash removal fees for us, the ordinary citizens. Environmental fees are being introduced for manufacturers and importers of goods: supposedly fees for packaging disposal. All this is

supposed to go towards creating a modern, waste-free household waste processing system.

The question is: will it?!

I recently published material from the series: “how many predatory gulls.” Yes, but who in the media hasn’t written about this? Just another illustration of the “Pull-Push principle” in the power-business nexus in our country, nothing more. Fresh news: “Chaika stated there are not enough criminal cases related to the ‘trash reform.’” (I’m quoting “Kommersant”).

The Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation, Yuri Chaika, during a meeting in Rostov-on-Don dedicated to oversight issues in the field of MSW management, stated that few criminal cases are being initiated in Russia concerning this issue.

“It should be noted the low effectiveness of organizing criminal prosecution of guilty parties. The number of cases initiated based on their materials in the field of illegal MSW circulation is insignificant,” said the Prosecutor General. He noted that 600 violations were recorded in this area in the country, and only in 100 cases were criminal cases initiated, but only 25 of them reached court.”

Tougher, in short, guys, tougher! Regional monopolists are still resisting the federal super-monopolist! We need to “press” harder!

“Experts” unanimously shout: “The All-Russian Environmental Operator will be the guarantor of the completion of the trash reform.” Only I haven’t seen a single news piece yet about real actions to implement modern technologies. It’s all a power and money struggle. And the trash — just throw it far enough so people don’t see it, and that’s it!

So how much trash do we have?

The protest against the construction of the Shies landfill has already done more for nature protection in our country than the activities of all environmental organizations over the past decade.

You may disagree with me, that’s my opinion. But now, probably, you won’t find anyone who doesn’t know about the trash problem. Everyone’s thinking about it! Did they know before, did they think about it? Not many.

And now — widespread public attention. And that’s very good: this problem is common.

So how much trash do we have in the country? Is this trash really that dangerous?

700 metric tons per resident of Russia —

100 billion tons of waste have already accumulated in landfills, dumps, and storage facilities in our country!

Agricultural and household waste from the population — no more than 5—7%!

93—95% of waste is industrial waste! It’s more toxic and dangerous than household waste.

Of the accumulated waste since the Soviet era, 70% is located in Russia!

About 15,000 hectares—territory of officially registered waste disposal sites!

Meanwhile, the number of unregistered dumps exceeds the number of registered ones by 2 to 3 times!

The municipal solid waste sites we've learned about now, after protests across the country, are just the tip of the iceberg! And that's at most 7% of the safest waste!

93% of waste, specifically industrial waste, is the most dangerous and toxic!

And don't let the phrase "industrial waste" mislead you. It's closer to all of us than it seems. Even in small towns, there are power plants providing heat and hot water. Their waste is classified as "industrial."

And the vast industrial regions in our country are already completely toxic. In my opinion, living there is impossible. Yet millions of people live, work, and raise children there. The accumulated environmental damage dates back to the early days of industrial development. Then came the era of industrialization, the "five-year plan" constructions, when industry was built at any cost and in the shortest possible time.

Back then, the authorities didn't care about people's lives, let alone discuss ecology! Over the years, for instance, the heaps of waste and slag around enterprises started to erode, seeping into aquifers and then into bodies of water. All of this was placed, I repeat, in completely unsuitable locations. There was no concept of "environmental assessment" at all.

The expedition route has just crossed the West Siberian Plain, the center of our country's oil and petrochemical industry. Just in the Tyumen and Tomsk regions, there are about 3500 sludge pits, hazardous to the environment, with no funding for their elimination. These are dumping sites on the territories of oil refining enterprises, where solid and liquid waste is disposed of, including those contaminated with petroleum products.

From these, pollutants seep into the groundwater. The entire vast plain consists of marshy areas. Groundwater is at the surface. The north is permafrost beneath a surface layer of thawing soil. This is the so-called large West Siberian artesian basin. More than 2000 rivers flow across the West Siberian Plain, with a total length exceeding 250,000 km. These rivers discharge about 1200 km^3 of water into the Kara Sea annually—five times more than the Volga.

This is the general situation. In industrial areas and large cities, it's been off the charts for a long time. But it affects everyone, everywhere: we're connected by rivers that carry runoff from waste sites. We're linked by winds that transport toxic smoke for thousands of miles.

"Everything's fine, my lovely marquise?!"

700 TONS OF ALREADY ACCUMULATED WASTE PER RESIDENT OF THE COUNTRY!

The garbage catastrophe that everyone only noticed today concerns just a tiny fraction of the least dangerous waste—household MSW!

Chapter 44. Forest fires in the Russian Taiga

Part One: State forest management

The role and influence of society on state institutions.

In the summer of 2019, the issue of forest fires in Siberia was one of the loudest topics. Smoke from the fires in the Russian Taiga reached the cities. There were a lot of articles in the media and publications online. All of this dragged mountains of crap into the light of day (sorry, but there's no other way to put it!). It revealed the complete lack of a coordinated firefighting system in our great country. And the "little things": corruption, the indifference of officials, the shortage of professional specialists with a trend towards the complete extinction of the last experts as a species!

Do you think only the animals in the Russian Taiga are going extinct, and the trees are just being cut down for lumber?! We humans are just as much a part of the overall ecosystem, equally involved in the ongoing process of the extinction of living nature. Look at how

this happens: it's a simple logical chain of events. With the change in the type of government in our GREAT (Great! I'm sick of hearing people badmouth their land and homeland!) country, the social system was disrupted. The established scheme of state governance was broken.

The issue isn't which state system is better: "capitalist" or "socialist." Both have plenty of flaws! The point is that there were long-term goals and technical specialists focused on solving such problems. When there was a "power grab," completely different people started pushing their way into management. Now, the generation of "effective managers" is fully at the helm, with the tactical task of snatching whatever they can, here and now. Specialists, people with a scientific approach, with strategic thinking, who see issues in perspective, still exist. The key word: FOR NOW. They don't make decisions. They don't train the next generation.

And the system for training specialists itself has been reoriented: where there was training for engineer-specialists, now they prepare super-qualified consumers, essentially with a specialization in “grab and divide.” In the forestry sector, for example, the specialization of “forest engineer” is becoming less common, while the

specializations of “lawyer” or “economist” are increasing. I'm not saying economists aren't needed.

I'm saying that the center of gravity of the departmental system should be properly placed. At the foundation—forests, their renewal during use, then scientific work and monitoring. And only above them, on the third floor, is the economy. You can't make “cut and divide” the foundation of a viable system! And the continuation of this logical chain of the development of the state forest management system has led to the overturning of the system! You can't put everything “upside down”!

Another point illustrating the same trend is the "scattering to the corners." There's no clear management. Administrative functions handed over to local authorities are, once again, in the hands of "effective managers." It's the same old "rip and split." And the fires in the Russian Taiga, just like migratory birds, don't recognize administrative boundaries! They "migrate" perfectly from regions where there's chaos and no fire monitoring system to places where work is being done. This completely devalues all efforts across the entire country!

These are the two most vivid illustrations of the defects in the management system. The fires highlighted these defects especially brightly. The ministers themselves, top-level managers, acknowledged the problems. Let's hope something gets reformed.

And, separately, about the role of society and public organizations.

What can we, not being government officials, do?

1. Spread information about the problems existing in society and the Russian Taiga. Don't let them be silenced!

This is effective. It works. It is now clear that it was precisely the wave of indignation from people, ordinary citizens, that caught the attention of the authorities and forced them to act.

An important point: regional “effective managers” silence problems. They send inaccurate reports “upward.” The more corrupt the administrations in the region, the more so. We can break the “conspiracy of silence”! Previously, the average citizen didn't have this opportunity, but now they do. There's the internet, there are social networks. And there's a chance to “reach the heavens”!

2. Present public scientific analysis to government bodies.

This is not my level. Not the level of an individual person. But I'm already thinking about this issue. It's expensive and requires joint efforts, but it's effective. And effectiveness can grow.

Some large environmental organizations do this. They have, for example, a dozen specialists on staff, on salary. The average salary in Russia is a little over 42 thousand, which is about 400 thousand a month. With taxes about 600, plus expenses for conducting work. That is, up to a million rubles a month is the cost of such work. It's clear that this isn't easy!

BUT! Earlier, I wrote about the collapse of the state system and the staffing issue. This collapse didn't happen overnight; it took a couple of decades. Now, people have noticed the problem and are thinking about what to do. They'll be forced to rebuild and restore things. This will take no less time—another twenty, if not thirty years. Building usually takes longer than dismantling! And public organizations could help right now, shortening the path. They can't solve all the issues, of course, but they can show the direction to move. Small teams of professionals focused on results work

immeasurably faster! It's like special forces compared to regular army units.

Let me share a little secret that many people don't know. "Big Business," the corporations, have their own "public special forces." There are numerous public organizations whose names are not known to the general public. These organizations don't advertise themselves and don't conduct "educational projects among the masses." Through them, they fund workers of scientific institutes (I don't want to use the word "scientist"), who are given grants for commissioned scientific work justifying the need to increase logging areas.

They push their necessary ideas through various public councils at government agencies. They work with deputies lobbying for the interests of the timber industry. And for a company making $10 million a month from logging the Russian Taiga, spending 10 million rubles monthly on such "public activities" in their interest is no issue at all. Society, in the sense of the collective citizens, is at a disadvantage compared to the organized (I almost wrote "criminal") community of the country's business elite.

Can anything be done about this? In our country, only large international organizations can currently handle such a scale of work: they have international funding. Worldwide, the institution of public organizations creates a counterbalance to the commercial interests of business elites in government bodies. Because it has developed over years. Real trade unions, consumer rights protection societies, and environmental organizations included. We haven't had such an institution evolving naturally to defend society's interests. Business simply "moved into the freed-up territory" all at once, with huge money. And there's no counterbalance! No one is defending the rights of the ordinary person!

That's right, I'm talking about ordinary civil society institutions. For many, it's probably no secret that volunteer fire brigades are common in other countries. Non-profit public organizations that have their own fleet of vehicles and put out fires in their community. What is Greenpeace doing in our country now, conducting courses for volunteer forest firefighters? I think people understand perfectly well that they are nothing compared to the millions of burning hectares of forest. But they consciously show the path where development can go! The development process is just long. If such

public interactions, like volunteer firefighters, took centuries to form elsewhere, then we also need time.

What can I say, can we now create an independent institute of scientific forecasting? Can we advance public strategic initiatives for preserving the habitat, for preserving the Russian Taiga? Let's act! Whatever happens, happens: any movement is better than standing still!

Part two: climate change on the planet and fires in the Russian Taiga

Should we extinguish: the applicability of global experience to the Russian Taiga.

This summer, 2019, a statement by a high-ranking official in our country caused a stir, claiming that it's even harmful to extinguish fires in Siberia. Let's figure it out.

Canada. Conditions similar to the Russian Taiga.

"Shift in attitude.

Canadians' attitude toward fire has noticeably changed over the years. For most of the 20th century, extinguishing fires (known as firefighting) was the goal. Achieving this goal was often costly, but overall it was

successful, albeit at the expense of ecological values.

By the 1970s, recognition of the ecological benefits of fire had increased. As forest users had already realized, suppression is not always necessary or desirable. Today, fire management includes a range of firefighting levels, from full extinguishment to minimal or no intervention at all.

The decision to fight a fire or let it burn naturally is based on a hierarchy of priorities set by the government body responsible for managing the fire where it burns. In most Canadian forests, provincial and territorial bodies are responsible for fighting forest fires. Areas under federal government responsibility include national parks and military bases.

High-priority protection areas include residential zones, highly productive commercial forests, and recreational facilities. Low-priority areas are generally wild parks and remote forests with limited economic value—although the protection of rare habitats, culturally significant areas, and similar values will influence suppression decisions."

(Translation via machine translator.)

As you can see, everything resembles our country. In the USSR, by the 1970s, a strategy of non-intervention in forest fires had also developed in certain cases. Much of the reasoning was economic: it was expensive. But there were also ecological reasons. After fires, the ecosystem of the taiga regions restores itself. Some believe this is even beneficial for the renewal of the taiga. I have reviewed everything available on this issue. I'll share my opinion: I agree, but with some amendments:

First, we need competent monitoring on a national scale. Data from our services show that the overwhelming majority of fires are caused by humans! "Control zones" are possible and necessary, but only if we eliminate human-caused ignitions!

This was impossible in the USSR, but it's possible now. We have satellites. We need a system! Take note of what the Canadians are writing: clear categories of forests, clear mechanisms of interaction. And the involvement of regional authorities isn't an issue when everyone works together smoothly and functions are distributed.

Second. Our scientific understanding of connections in the biosphere has grown. It's time to update the concept of non-intervention in firefighting. And, oddly enough, in the direction of increasing such areas! Grant them

international status, share experiences and knowledge between countries. These are recent studies: the impact of such vast forest areas on the climate is stronger than previously thought. But all this is against the backdrop of global monitoring and a clear firefighting system in adjacent areas, of course!

Third. We need social and public reforms. Even professionals, real experts in forestry, scientists, don't see this. There's the status of reserves, that's clear. But there are no global zones of tranquility on a planetary scale. The need has arisen, experts understand something's off. Yet they don't even see approaches to solutions: their perspectives are narrow. This is a completely separate topic of conversation, but the issue is pressing. And it's important for all countries.

Looking back at the events of the summer of 2019, the fires came dangerously close to populated areas. The inability of the responsible agencies to effectively extinguish them became apparent. As for monitoring and coordinating actions, it wasn't even worth mentioning. Against this backdrop, the statements from officials sounded cynical, but there was a grain of truth in them.

This principle of non-intervention in certain natural fires is followed in Australia, Mexico, and New Zealand. The United States has also concluded that attempts to eliminate every single forest fire might actually make things worse. Even in some reserves, forest fires are left to nature.

A separate issue is the tropical forests of South America. They produce up to 20% of the planet's oxygen. Amid the fires in Siberia, the news about the global fires in the Amazon rainforest didn't make as much of an impact here. But the fires this year have reached terrifying proportions there too! The Amazon rainforest is burning, primarily in Brazil.

According to Reuters, the number of fires in the region increased by 83% compared to the previous year. Since the beginning of 2019, Brazil's National Institute for Space Research recorded over 75,000 fires. For example, 18,629 square kilometers of forest burned in just one July. By the end of summer, there were more than 2,500 fires simultaneously in Brazil's rainforests. A state of emergency was declared.

This year, the fires in the Amazon rainforest were at the forefront of global public attention. Brazil's President, Jair Bolsonaro, even publicly claimed that, in his opinion,

the fires were started by non-governmental environmental organizations to secure additional funding, although he provided no evidence for this. Many countries offered Brazil assistance in extinguishing the fires. However, some, like Norway and Germany, stated they wouldn't consider allocating funds as long as a corrupt government was in power. They probably understand that the money would just be embezzled anyway.

As you can see, the problems are the same all over the world! Fires and corruption, corruption and fires!

The real cause of the fires in South America is a combination of factors. On one hand, agricultural areas are expanding there. Land is simply being burned for pastures and plantations. On the other hand, there's the unusually dry weather: usually, the jungles are so wet that they just don't burn! This, by the way, is yet another tangible confirmation of real climate change! But that's not what interests us. Understanding the situation there allows us to compare it with the fires in the Russian Taiga. And better understand what can be done to preserve our own, native Russian Taiga.

Unlike the burned biogeocenoses of Siberia, tropical evergreen forests are apparently more severely damaged by fire. It irreversibly changes the composition and structure of the forests. The population of common tree species there massively decreases, and rare species can be completely wiped out by the fires. Signs of recovery in tropical forests are absent even 15 years after a fire. Without knowing, one might assume that everything in the tropics grows like yeast and recovers quickly.

In Siberia, biogeocenoses form according to the principle of succession—one forest burns, another grows in its place, and through several stages of the cycle, the forest is restored in a form not much different from the one that burned. Without burning, forests even lose their viability—some biologists claim. Well, that's just a hypothesis! But the facts are that humans have already interfered with the natural cycle.

And so, humans must analyze the changes and adjust their approach to the biogeocenoses of the Russian Taiga. Droughts dry out the upper taiga, causing more to burn. The dried peat of the swamps absorbs the fire. And not even winter and snow can stop the fires: in spring, the fire that overwintered in the peat of the swamp emerges again. The fire continues.

Overall, the Russian Taiga in Siberia is in a better position than the tropical jungles! Everything can be resolved: our biosystem is such that it can successfully recover! What is needed?

— Clear federal control over logging and monitoring of fires.

— Increase (!) "zones of tranquility." In my opinion, that's the way! We don't lack funds for firefighting; they're just used inefficiently! And there's plenty of land for logging secondary forests: businesses encroach on minimally disturbed forests due to primitive, outdated technologies. More stupidity than necessity! Only part of what's logged is used, and the rest is simply abandoned. Or, very often, it's burned. Logging residues are one of the factors in increasing fires, burning like gunpowder.

As far as I can see, these points have been noted by the department. A "return to the USSR" is, of course, impossible. But the positive experience of centralized control and management will likely be used. We'll push with public opinion so they don't stop halfway!

Together we will preserve the Russian Taiga! And the Russian Taiga will help us—it's resilient and capable of adapting!

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