

Report of the Russian Federation on implementing the provisions of the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty 2008-2009 (in compliance with Article 17)

An analysis of meeting the requirements of the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty (Protocol) is presented in the form of a structured Report on fulfilling the provisions of the Protocol itself and its Annexes (I-VI) and covers the period of activity of the 53rd wintering and 54th seasonal Russian Antarctic Expeditions (from April 2008 to May 2009).

PROTOCOL

1. Legal and administrative actions to provide observance of the Protocol

In order to implement control for observance of the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, Roshydromet designated observers of the activity of the Russian individual persons and legal entities in the Antarctic Treaty Area from the participants of the Russian Antarctic Expedition:

- From December 2008 to March 2009 – **Mr. Ilyin Vladimir F.**, Deputy Chief of the 54th RAE on geological-geophysical work;
- From November 2008 to May 2009 – **Mr. Kuchin Vladimir A.**, Chief of the 54th RAE, Head of the seasonal expedition;
- From March 2009 to May 2010 – **Mr. Venderovich Viktor M.**, Head of the wintering team of the 54th RAE, chief of Novolazarevskaya station.

The observers are guided in their activity by the Provision on the order of designating observers of the activity of the Russian individual persons and legal entities in the Antarctic Treaty Area and fulfilling the functions they are entrusted with, adopted by the Order of Roshydromet of 07.12.99 No. 139.

Roshydromet also designated responsible representatives of the Russian Federation in the Antarctic Treaty Area:

Bondarchuk Vladimir A.	- Head of Mirny Observatory – in the operation area of Mirny Observatory;
Turkeyev Aleksey V.	- Head of Vostok station – in the operation area of Vostok station;
Panfilov Alexander V.	- Head of Progress station – in the operation area of Progress station;
Davydov Vladimir Ye.	- Deputy Head of Novolazarevskaya station – in the operation area of Novolazarevskaya station;
Kutsuruba Alexander I.	- Head of Bellingshausen station – in the operation area of Bellingshausen station;
Kiselev Vladimir V.	- Head of Molodezhnaya field base – in the operation area of Molodezhnaya field base;
Ivanov Nikolay A.	- Head of Druzhnaya-4 field base – in the operation area of Druzhnaya-4 field base;
Benivolensky Sergey Ye.	- Head of Soyuz field base – in the operation area of Soyuz field base;

Voronin Valery R.	- Head of traverse – in the area of sledge-caterpillar traverses Mirny – Vostok;
Vdovenko Ilya K.	- Head of traverse – in the area of sledge-caterpillar traverses Progress – Vostok;
Viktorov Valery A.	- Captain of the R/V “Akademik Fedorov” - in the operation area of the R/V “Akademik Fedorov”;
Gandyukhin Viktor V.	- Head of the cruise of the R/V “Akademik Aleksander Karpinsky” - in the operation area of the R/V “Akademik Aleksander Karpinsky”.

The representatives carried out their activities in compliance with the functions indicated in the Provision on the order of designating responsible representatives of the Russian Federation and fulfilling the responsibilities they are entrusted with, adopted by the Order of Roshydromet of 07.12.99 No. 139.

Based on the results of the reports received from the Representatives of the Russian Federation during the reporting period in 2009, no breaches of the Protocol requirements and non-conformities of the activity performed to the activity applied for by the Russian individual and legal entities were revealed.

The RAE personnel were provided with the information required under the Protocol and briefing on the environmental protection of the Antarctic among the personnel of the stations and bases.

Readiness of the rapid response teams for eliminating emergency situations and their consequences was checked on a regular basis.

No causes demanding suspension of activities under the RAE work programs were revealed and no interruption in the activity itself was performed by the representatives.

Evidence of the visit to the Antarctic Treaty Area by the Russian individual and legal entities was provided only from Bellingshausen station (Waterloo Island, King George). From 10 March to the middle of April 2009, the island was visited by the Russian ships (chartered by foreign tour operators) the “Akademik Ioffe”, “Professor Multanovsky” and “Grigory Mikheyev”. All these ships have the effective Permits. The other RAE stations, bases and ships were not visited by the Russian individual and legal entities during the reporting period.

The information obtained was submitted to the Secretariat of the Commission on consideration of applications for activity in the Antarctic at Roshydromet. This information allows the Commission to control the activity of the Russian individual persons and legal entities in the Antarctic Treaty Area, make it more orderly and draw their attention to the need of obtaining a national permit for activities in the Antarctic Treaty Area.

2. Plans of actions in emergency

All Russian marine ships that have a Permit for activity in the Antarctic also have the Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plans to combat pollution with oil products of marine areas corresponding to the requirements of MARPOL 73/78.

The plans of action in emergency for the Russian Antarctic stations are available in the form of the approved instructions onboard the ships. Team training and exercises are undertaken on a periodical basis.

ANNEX I. Environmental Impact Assessment

3. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

After issuance of the Decision of the Government of the Russian Federation of December 11, 1998 No. 1476 “On adoption of the Order for consideration and issuance of permits for activities of the Russian individual persons and legal entities in the Antarctic Treaty Area”, all kinds of activity in the

Antarctic must undergo the corresponding procedures prior to their implementation. They are presented in the Regulations of the Commission for consideration of applications for activities of the Russian individual persons and legal entities in the Antarctic Treaty Area and issuance of conclusions on them. This Commission, based on the submitted documents (including the EIA), makes a decision about a possibility of issuing a permit for the activity.

The EIA preparation is a mandatory condition for obtaining a permit by individual persons and legal entities, including private and state organizations.

4. List of the Permits issued for activity in the Antarctic and the corresponding EIAs performed from January to December 2009

During the period January to December 2009, the Commission issued 4 permits for implementing the activity in the Antarctic Treaty Area:

No. of permit, date of issuance	To whom it was granted	Type of activity	Area (route)	Period of validity
059 24.02.2009	Inter-regional public organization "Association of polar explorers"	Visit of Antarctic stations by the group of representatives of the Russian Federation and the Principality of Monaco in the framework of the IPY events	Antarctic stations Novolazarevskaya, Molodezhnaya, Progress, Vostok (Russia), Troll (Norway), Davis (Australia), Princess Elisabeth (Belgium), Zhongshan (China), Maitri (India)	13 January 2009 – 31 January 2009
060 29.05.2009	Institution of the Russian Academy of Science of the Lenin and October Revolution Orders Vernadsky Institute of geochemistry and analytical chemistry of RAS (GEOKHI RAS)	Polygon marine geological-geophysical studies in the Antarctic onboard the R/V "Akademik Boris Petrov"	Indian Ocean region of the Southern Ocean – Prydz Bay, the Commonwealth Sea	1 June 2009 – 31 December 2013
061 11.11.2009	OJSC "Far Eastern Shipping Company"	Transportation of general cargo onboard the M/V "Igarka" according to the time-charter of 7 July 2009	From 20 deg E to 40 deg W, to the south of 60 deg S	11 November 2009 – 24 June 2013
062 17.12.2009	SI "Arctic and Antarctic Research Institute" of Roshydromet	Aerophysical and geological work in the Vestfold Oasis (Princess Elisabeth Land)	Vestfold Oasis of the Princess Elisabeth Land, East Antarctica	17 December 2009 – 31 March 2013

Besides in 2009, the Initial Environmental Evaluations were submitted for consideration by the Commission of Roshydromet and issuance of the Permit: the EIA of activity for supply of the Indian Antarctic stations in Prydz Bay and Leningradsky Bay using the M/V "Ivan Papanin" and the EIA of activity for provision of ice escort by the icebreaker "Vladimir Ignatyuk of the M/V "Ivan Papanin) in Prydz Bay. The applicant is the OJSC "Murmansk Sea Shipping Company".

5. Monitoring

In compliance with Article 5, Annex 1, monitoring of environmental key parameters is carried out for assessing and checking the impact of implemented activity.

In the areas of the expedition activity, the monitoring programs were carried out for the purpose of early forecasting the unfavorable development of the processes and preventing the environmental damage.

Progress station

Monitoring of the impact of construction and related activity on the environmental compartments

The monitoring was performed during the active phase of construction (summer season) by the visual method.

The construction at the Progress station has been already carried out for several years. The following tasks were set before the builders:

- the territory adjoining the construction site should be left in the pristine form to the maximum extent possible;
- in the course of the work, disturbance of the natural landscape should be avoided to the maximum extent possible, which will in turn help to avoid the formation of crushed dust-forming ground fraction, harmful both for the vehicles and ecology of Lake Stepped;
- minimization of the motion of heavy transport vehicles in the area.

The observations showed that all building, auxiliary and accompanying activities were not beyond the boundaries of the territory allotted for construction, which corresponds to the requirements set for the builders.

In spite of active transport activity in the watershed area of Lake Stepped, the visual lake contamination (presence of iridescent films and garbage) was not registered. However, the study of scientists from the Shirshov Institute of Oceanography of RAS has shown an increase in the area of Lake Stepped in the concentrations of organic compounds (hydrocarbons and lipids) in all investigated media (snow, ice, soil, moss and lichen), as compared with data of 2001 and 2003, which can be connected with construction activities in the region.

At the present time, Lake Kristalnoye (Potable) serves as a source of drinking water for Progress station.

Druzhnaya-4 and Soyuz field bases

The surface soil layer in the territories of the Druzhnaya-4 and Soyuz field bases has not undergone significant mechanical transformation for the time of their existence. The landscape change is insignificant. The main natural water bodies, which can be subjected to contamination at the Druzhnaya-4 field base, are the Lakes Bazovoye, Ledyanoye (potable) and Reliktovoye and the ambient snow cover. Lakes Ledyanoye and Reliktovoye are visually not subjected to anthropogenic impact. Water from Lake Bazovoye has gone and the lake bottom is bare, allowing cleaning it from foreign matter brought by strong winds. The lake is a running-water lake – as a result of significant melting in the summer season, a large amount of water comes to the lake and a self-purification process takes place.

According to visual observations, the snow cover of the Base was insignificantly contaminated by products of fuel combustion from the diesel-electric station and transport vehicles.

All water sources examined at the Druzhnaya-4 field base are formed of melt snow water. The water source of the Soyuz Base is Lake Beaver, which is probably connected with the ocean: the water has a brackish taste. The sanitary-bacteriological analysis of water used at Druzhnaya-4 Base for drinking needs showed its epidemiological safety. The ecological state of the Druzhnaya-4 and Soyuz field bases is satisfactory at the present time.

Mirny station

In the area of the Haswell archipelago, seasonal ornithological observations were carried out. A comparison of the results of the counts with the results of the work in the 51st RAE shows that the numbers of the populations of the Emperor penguin, Adelie penguin and Antarctic fulmar and Cape petrel remain stable. The numbers of the Antarctic petrel as compared with 2006 have significantly increased.

ANNEX II. Conservation of Antarctic Flora and Fauna

6. Exchange of information on flora and fauna

In compliance with Article 6, Annex 2:

- a) No takings of animals or plants by RAE were undertaken during the reporting period.

7. Quantity and character of permits related to flora and fauna

During the reporting period, no permits related to flora and fauna were requested and issued.

ANNEX III. Waste Disposal and Waste Management

8. Preparation of the Waste Management Plans

The garbage disposal at the stations and onboard ships is made in strict compliance with the existing instructions.

9. Introduction of the Waste Management Plans

The waste disposal at the RAE stations and onboard the RAE ships is realized in accordance with the adopted instructions.

In compliance with the Protocol, the methodology of waste disposal planning for the RAE stations and ships was developed ПАЭ.

10. Inventory of past activities

The fourth volume of the publication “Russian studies in the Antarctic” with description of the RAE past activity areas is continued (the first 3 volumes were published before 2001) is published.

11. Waste disposal

In compliance with the requirements of the Decision of the Government of the Russian Federation of 24.09.01 No. 685 (paragraph 3.1 of the Plan of Actions) and the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, work on cleaning the territories, collection and removal of waste was continued at the stations during the reporting period. The work was carried out both during the seasonal period under the special programs and during the wintering period by all personnel at each station.

In total, more than 110 tons of waste was removed from the Antarctic during the season of the 54th RAE onboard the R/V “Akademik Fedorov”.

ANNEX IV. Prevention of marine pollution

All Russian marine ships that have a Permit for activity in the Antarctic (including the research-expedition vessel “Akademik Fedorov” and the research vessel “Akademik Aleksander Karpinsky”) have shipboard garbage management plans, and are equipped with incinerators and treatment systems, corresponding to the requirements of МАППОЖИ 73/78.

ANNEX V. Area protection and management

No work connected with the Antarctic Specially Protected Areas (ASPA) was carried out except for the seasonal ornithological observations in ASPA No. 127 “Haswell Island”.

ANNEX VI. On liability

The Law “On regulation of activities of the Russian citizens and legal entities in the Antarctic” is being prepared for adoption. Section 6 “Liability in implementing activities in the Antarctic” (2 articles) defines types of liability of citizens, official and legal entities for infringement of the law regulating relations in the Antarctic activities. Legal standards of liability for harmful environmental impact arising from the activities of citizens and legal entities are established. Procedure and terms of payment of the costs of response action is defined.