

Kyoto'' forests in Russia: opportunities and problems

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Today, the Federal Forestry Agency creates registry, in which would be great to include the information on carbon stocks in the Russian forests. At the International Climate Conference of the Parties in Copenhagen Russian President outlined the official position that the climate agreement will be signed by Russia under two conditions: first - participation of all countries, and second - with an adequate account of the Russian forests. The international carbon market is operating actively with impressive growth rates, so its turnover reached 136 billion dollars in 2009. Prices there range from 8.5 to 30 Euro per ton of C02-eq. Russia, having enormous potential on this market as a seller, takes a minimum share. Only in 2011 the first Russian "carbon" ton appeared on this market. "Sberbank" approved the first 33 projects with total volume of 60 million tons of C02 equivalent. There are no forestry projects among them. International forecasts of the impact of climate change on forests of the planet for a century ahead show that the southern borders of the forest zone will retreat to the north, and part of northern forests will spread into the tundra zone. The probability of fires at the southern border increases. Center of Environmental Innovations is developing recommendations for adaptation of the forest sector to climate change in four regions: Altai, Irkutsk, Kamchatka, Sakhalin. In addition to the recommendations, a number of pilot projects are planned in order to turn on the economic instruments, contained in the Kyoto Protocol, and to base the opportunities of attracting investments in the next climate agreement. It must be admitted that the contribution of boreal forests is staying far undervalued in international climate negotiations, especially in comparison with political activity of tropical countries, where special mechanisms - REDD - were devised enabling developing countries not to cut down their forests and to receive from that investments from the "carbon market". The position of Russian forests in international climate negotiations should be strengthened from both within (the pilot projects, monitoring of forests at the regional level) and outside, but for that it is necessary to find allies in the boreal forest zone, which may be Austria, Canada, United States, Finland, Sweden.