Chapter 5

WESTERN AND RUSSIAN ENVIRONMENTAL NGOS: A GREENER RUSSIA?

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Since the mid-1980s foreign governments, multilateral institutions, and foreign and international foundations have committed well over a billion dollars to address environmental issues in the Russian Federation.[1] By and large, foreign and international funders have viewed these efforts as either democracy assistance or technical assistance, quite distinct from the even larger sums involved in economic assistance packages. While a billion dollars for environmental assistance may sound impressive, its effect on environmental protection and natural resource management in Russia has been quite limited, even marginal. However, its effect on the development of citizens' environmental advocacy groups in Russia is notable.

In this chapter I consider the assistance programs of foreign and international foundations (nongovernmental organizations or private donor foundations) that are actively providing environmental aid to Russia. I find that the success of these assistance programs cannot be measured in environmentally progressive change or in heightened concern among national or local decision makers for environmental issues. Indeed, using those criteria to gauge the influence of these programs would lead to only one verdict: that they have been a failure. However, these programs have succeeded in substantially assisting the establishment and development of third-sector organizations in Russia. To some degree they have helped to forge democratic channels between civil society and

political society that previously did not exist and that allow Russians to express interest and participate in environmental policy making.

Foreign and international foundations have granted nearly all their environmental aid to the so-called third sector in Russia, as opposed to the state or commercial sectors. This aid has empowered social actors, created communication networks both horizontally and vertically, raised the level of public awareness of both environmental and democratic issues, and helped to make civil society groups more professional, organized, and strategic. This success has come by way of imported Western ideas of communication, coalition building, strategy, and professionalism that have taken hold firmly among many civic advocacy groups in Russia. However, despite these successes, no significant alteration has occurred in the state-society balance of power.[2]

Aid from foreign and international foundations has, as yet, had conspicuously little effect on the environment or on the implementation of environmental policy. The major reasons for this failure are the weakness of the post-Soviet state, and of channels for societal participation, and the connection between environmental and economic or industrial issues.

First, the Russian state not only has little control over industrial and commercial interests but it has a difficult time policing itself: The state bureaucracy has been a major violator of environmental law in Russia. Meager budgetary resources and nearly continuous administrative and organizational flux—the constant instability of elites and institutions—contribute to the state's weak and ineffectual nature vis-à-vis environmental protection and natural resource management. Since his accession on New Year's Eve 1999, President Vladimir Putin has worked successfully to strengthen the state and now presides over the first federal budget surplus; however, the state overall remains bloated and ineffectual in a number of areas.

Second, channels for societal participation are still weak. The state enjoys a high level of autonomy: It lacks accountability, and democratic processes are absent or malfunctioning. In addition, the party system is weak in a representational sense, both generally and with respect to environmental interests. Although the larger parties pay lip service to environmental issues, even the "green" parties (KEDR and the Green Party) are either green in name only or politically powerless.

A third cause of failure is the inextricable link—as well as the undeniable tension—between environmental and economic or industrial issues. The sheer magnitude of both problems and their connection to each other means that resolving environmental issues by addressing only one and not the other is impossible. Industrial pollution, for example, is a problem that cannot be fully addressed without simultaneously tackling the health and reconstitution of the economy as well as the industrial infrastructure of the country. Yet most Western nongovernmental organizations that fund environmental aid programs do not

address the economic or industrial sources of environmental problems. Economic assistance is usually considered an issue area separate and distinct from democracy or technical assistance. There are exceptions. For example, the European Union's program of Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States attempts to combine environmental and industrial or commercial issues in many of its assistance programs. However, such issue linkage is absent from the strategies of most foreign nongovernmental assistance programs.

The Western nongovernmental funders that do use holistic programs and build coalitions among environmental, economic, social, and state actors have had a more substantive effect on both the development of third-sector groups and the political-environmental process in Russia. Thus those Western foundations whose sole goal is to assist in the development of the third sector, making it in effect the third leg of the democratic stool, have achieved some level of success. If the goals, however, are to improve Russia's environment as well as its environmental policies and practices, assistance programs would be much more effective if the grantors paid attention to building coalitions among the various sectors rather than giving money only to third-sector groups.

The arguments that I make in this chapter draw primarily on interviews that I conducted from June to August 1998 with representatives of most of the key Western groups providing environmental assistance to Russia as well as with those of many important Russian recipient groups. I conducted most in Russia and many in the Russian language; a few took place in the United States. This chapter is also informed by a nearly yearlong trip in 1999 during which I researched environmental politics in Russia. Most of the assistance programs considered here commenced only in 1992–1993, after the breakup of the Soviet Union, and thus had been active for less than ten years, making evaluation a challenging task. Several foundations were involved with Soviet citizens' groups in the perestroika period but had been able to send money into the country and cooperate in a substantive way only after the collapse of the Soviet system. Thus while their involvement may predate the 1990s, their funding programs and unfettered collaboration do not.

The Western organizations that I chose for this study have a high profile in the sphere of environmental assistance to Russia. Russian funding recipients mentioned them repeatedly in conversation, and their names appear frequently in the literature on Western interaction with the environmental movement in Russia. In addition, I selected a relatively diverse set, ranging from those that mainly work on advocacy (such as Greenpeace) to those that function mainly as donors to local groups (such as the Initiative for Social Action and Renewal in Eurasia [ISAR] and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation) to those that engage at the highest political level as well as in worldwide scientific movements (such as the World Wide Fund for Nature and the Green Cross).

In this chapter I first trace the history of environmental politics in the Soviet Union and Russia. I then go on to analyze the primary strategies used by Western NGOs engaged in environmental assistance to Russian third-sector groups, and I provide examples of each. Next I address the effects and limitations of these assistance strategies, as well as several theoretical explanations for the weakness of third-sector environmentalism in the post-Soviet context. I identify the double-headed strategy of interactive cooperation and multisectoral coalition building as having the greatest influence. Then I assess how Western NGOs evaluate their own assistance programs, make some suggestions for enhancing this process, and consider several lessons learned. Finally, I bring readers up to date on relevant political developments since I researched and wrote this chapter.

HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT: TRANSITIONS AND ENVIRONMENTALISM

The case of environmental politics in Russia under conditions of democratization presents compelling issues. First, the poor state of the environment in Russia, as well as in the entire former communist bloc, has become an international cause célèbre.[3] Environmental issues are, by their very nature, transboundary and even planetary in consequence. Given the size of the territory involved in the case of Russia, which spans a sixth of the earth's landmass, environmental issues are of concern to diplomats, scientists, activists, and the public everywhere.

Second, the environmental movement during perestroika was a powerful vehicle for citizen protest and the promotion of sweeping political change. It offered an entry point for Western foundations seeking to assist the development of the third sector in the Soviet Union. Given the relative strength, reach, and organization of the Soviet environmental movement in the late 1980s, Western NGOs that wanted to work with citizen advocacy groups in the Soviet Union were able to get started quickly with environmental groups, even when those same Western groups had no experience in working on environmental issues.[4]

Third, the subsequent weakness of the environmental movement, as well as of the third sector in general, in the post-Soviet context presents challenges for scholars as well as practitioners. Given the vivacity and evident influence of the Soviet environmental movement in the late 1980s and early 1990s, what accounts for its dramatic decline?

Russians who are environmentally active often claim a long history for environmentalism in their country, dating to tsarist times.[5] Because of the controlling and repressive nature of the Soviet political system, environmentalism in the Soviet Union was for the most part either an outright fiction or a result of efforts by the Communist Party leadership to turn what could have been an autonomous

social organization into a state-sponsored and thus highly controlled activity. Ecological groups in the Soviet period were allowed to address *only* nature conservation and uncontroversial scientific issues.[6] Organizations such as the All-Russian Society for the Protection of Nature (VOOP) were top-down constructs that channeled citizens' concerns for the environment away from overtly political issues and toward a sort of benign, uncritical, nature-loving exercise.[7]

The Stalin-era rush to industrialize contained the seeds of the Soviet approach to the environment, namely, that humans could and should be the master of nature. Official Soviet ideology claimed that the socialist command economy—centrally organized and rational—was incapable of disturbing the environment in any significant way; disorganized capitalism disrupted nature with its polluting and destructive environmental externalities. Under Stalin it became the norm for Soviet industrial enterprises to be formally responsible for policing their own environmental impact and conformity with environmental regulations. Thus polluter and police were one, and because the imperatives of industrial growth were far stronger than environmental concerns, the environmental impact departments of industrial enterprises were exceedingly weak or highly corrupt.

Under Mikhail Gorbachev citizens were allowed to engage in autonomous, self-organized activity free of state control. After Soviet authorities finally acknowledged the extent of the 1986 explosion at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, and when Soviet citizens learned that their government had made a concerted effort to suppress information about what had happened, citizen protests against nuclear power and other state-sponsored, environmentally questionable activities (such as the infamous river diversion project in Siberia) burst vigorously into the open.

In 1988 the state took its first step toward responding. The Central Committee of the Communist Party and the USSR Council of Ministers adopted a resolution called On the Radical Reconstruction [Perestroika] of Environmental Protection Activities in the Country. As a result, the State Committee on Nature Protection (Goskompriroda) was formed. Important in at least a symbolic way, its creation was "a significant change from the traditional Soviet view of environmental problems as discrete technological issues . . . . The structure of *Goskompriroda* reflected a progressive, systemic approach to environmental protection in recognition of the fact that environmental degradation had grown in size and complexity to become a regional, national, and international concern."[8] The Goskompriroda created a public council that sponsored unprecedented open hearings on environmental issues. During the first years of its existence, however, Goskompriroda operated in a virtual vacuum with respect to environmental legislation, policy, and practices.[9] Only several years later, after the complete dissolution of the state, would a more solid legal and regulatory environment be established.[10]

Since 1992 Russia's environmental efforts have been chaotic. Frequent changes in state environmental institutions, unclear relationships among these

institutions, their often overlapping responsibilities, and the shifting content of environmental laws have produced a highly unstable and often perplexing setting in which environmentally concerned citizens, advocacy groups, and decision makers must operate.

A telling example of such institutional instability is the history of Goskompriroda itself. Since its inception in 1988 this agency has undergone three major face-lifts. Even before the breakup of the Soviet Union, it had already been transformed from a state committee into the USSR Ministry of Ecology. In 1992 it became the Ministry of Protection of the Environment and Natural Resources of the Russian Federation. This transformation entailed the abolishment of seven USSR ministries and four republican ministries and the partial merging of several state committees.[11] In 1992–1993 the new Russian Federation's environment ministry and the partially merged state committees engaged in a power struggle. The result was a weak new ministry after the various state committees were able to reclaim most of their former responsibilities. After Yeltsin's reelection in the summer of 1996, the ministry was demoted once again to the status of a state committee and renamed Goskomekologia. In May 2000 Putin abolished the state committee altogether and relegated its primary function—that of environmental monitoring—to the Ministry of Natural Resources. Environmentalists considered this move absurd, given that the Ministry of Natural Resources is, at core, in the business of resource usage, not protection. The comments of an observer speaking of an earlier time remained true: "The structure of executive power is in a permanent state of reorganization, enlargement, disenlargement, and even liquidation of some bodies, which have to be restored again later."[12]

In addition, the overall political turmoil of Russia's transition from authoritarian centralism adds to the confusion on the environmental front. As power shifted from the center to the regions under the numerous and varying power-sharing agreements that Moscow signed with the majority of the eighty-nine "subjects of the federation" (including oblasts, *krais*, and republics), the locus of power and responsibility for environmental issues became ever blurrier. Beginning in the early 1990s, individual "subjects" began establishing their own regional ecological departments, while the Russian Federation Ministry of the Environment (later Goskomekologia) simultaneously created its own branch offices in the regions. The relationships between these regional authorities were not always clear and differed from region to region. By and large, Goskomekologia's branch offices performed an evaluative, regulatory, and monitoring (*kontrol'nyi*) role, tracking polluters and payments of fines. Regional ecological departments, on the other hand, tended to take a more active, executive (*ispolnitel'nyi*) role, by disbursing funds for environmental projects and helping to set regional environmental policy. In a few regions only one or the other agency existed, in which case it wore both hats, further obscuring the lines of authority. In Moscow in 1999 the head of the city's environmental protection

department and the head of the city's Goskomekologia branch division were one and the same man.

Many observers of and participants in Russian environmental politics agree that power over environmental issues now resides in the regions, not the center. Thus as a Russian sociologist of social movements noted, Goskomekologia's branch offices in many regions were no more influential than NGOs in the sense of having little actual power in the regions and no funding to speak of.[13] But given the varying power of regions vis-à-vis the center, as well as the varying configurations of power and personalities within each region, such statements, while generally true, were not universally so. Goskomekologia's funding was cut so drastically after 1998 that many regional and local branch offices had to lay off a significant percentage of their staffs before dissolving them altogether. Funding for the regional ecology departments, however, is more secure, as regional administrations have direct control of these budgets.

Environmental legislation in post-Soviet Russia has also been in flux. Environmentalists consider the 1991 Soviet Russian republic (RSFSR) law, On Protection of the Natural Environment, to be the most progressive piece of environmental legislation produced by Russian lawmaking bodies to date. Many consider it to be even more progressive than the Environment for Europe convention adopted at the European Ministerial Conference in Aarhus, Denmark, in June 1998 in the extent of its provisions for public participation in environmental decision making. The 1991 Russian law provides for a significant role for both individuals and NGOs to assist with monitoring and enforcement activities and guarantees the rights to free association and access to information, to seek legal redress for environmental degradation, and to make public demands for and participate in environmental impact assessments (EIAs).[14]

Unfortunately, many laws that Russia has passed since 1991 have been less forward looking in both ecological and participatory terms.[15] A 1995 EIA law does not provide for public participation in state EIAs and sets up procedures and restrictions so complex that citizens' groups usually cannot comply.[16] One long-time observer has called the 1996 Russian Federation law on public environmental review "terrible, but better than nothing"; it requires state organs to provide environmental materials associated with industrial projects to the public for review but only "at the eleventh hour and fifty-ninth minute."[17] In addition, "a veil of secrecy surrounds the activities of the ministries and agencies as they issue numerous regulations that often contradict laws and violate citizens' rights"; even the most progressive laws are poorly enforced.[18]

STRATEGIES OF WESTERN NGOS

The programs of most foreign and international NGOs typically encompass a wide range of activities and strategies, many of which have evolved over time

and have been greatly influenced by the indigenous Russian groups with which they work. Thus categorizing each foundation is nearly impossible. Nonetheless, we may compare the various strategies in play in several ways. Table 5.1 illustrates one way. The foundations listed represent general types, not a hard-and-fast match, and are meant as examples only.

The NGOs under consideration devote the overwhelming majority of their assistance to third-sector actors, that is, nonstate, noncommercial actors. The divide between grassroots and elite recipients is therefore in some ways a spurious one. *Elite* in this context does not necessarily refer to state actors; instead, it may refer to nongovernmental actors who are not focused on the masses. Whereas the British donor Charities Aid Foundation provides assistance to community-based initiatives, the MacArthur Foundation is committed to supporting intellectual and academic efforts, especially when the projects proposed are policy relevant. I call the latter focus *elite*.

Where assistance is provided to state actors (a small percentage of the total), the more traditional conception of *elite* applies. The MacArthur Foundation has on several occasions granted funds to the Russian Federation Ministry of the Environment and to individual state-run nature preserves (*zapovedniki*). The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) assists regional and national parliaments with the drafting of environmental legislation and has provided money, equipment, and training to *zapovedniki* around the country. While *zapovednik* personnel may not enjoy a high level of decision-making authority, they are nonetheless State Forest Service employees and are therefore more elite than grassroots.

The divide between support for the third sector generally and support for environmental groups is much clearer (see table 5.1). Western NGOs have mission statements or charters that set forth their overarching goals and thus determine their strategies. Of the groups under consideration here, about half aid environmental groups as a way to support the development of the third sector more generally, and the others support environmental groups because they themselves are environmentally active. Thus, for example, the Pennsylvania-based, nonprofit group Ecologia works exclusively with Russian environmental NGOs

TABLE 5.1 Strategies of Western Environmental NGOs by Goal Orientation and Type of Recipient

		Goal Orientation	
		Civil Society	**Environment**
Recipient	**Grassroots**	Charities Aid Foundation	Ecologia
	Elite	MacArthur Foundation	World Wide Fund for Nature

TABLE 5.2 Strategies of Western Environmental NGOs by Idea Source and Type of Involvement

		Idea Source	
		Indigenous	**Imported**
Type of Involvement	**Project Financing**	A	B
	Interactive Assistance	C	D

to promote high-quality monitoring of waterways, whereas the Charities Aid Foundation supports environmental groups as part of its effort to support the development of Russian nonprofit groups in general.

Table 5.2 illustrates another way to categorize strategies that the Western NGOs use. Nearly all the NGOs use a combination of these strategies, and examples of each (A, B, C, and D) are discussed below. An interactive strategy entails some level of substantive, programmatic cooperation or collaboration between donor and recipient, whereas project financing is limited to donations of money or equipment without substantive participation by the donor organization in the project itself. Alternatively, the difference may be thought of as that between process-driven and product-driven strategies, respectively, though the line between these concepts often is blurred. Simply put, a process-driven strategy is one in which the funder is engaged at some or all points between the start and end of a project, whereas a product-driven strategy tends to be limited to only the start and end points.

A: *PROJECT FINANCING FOR INDIGENOUS IDEAS*

Perhaps the clearest example of a strategy of project financing for indigenous ideas was the massive funding program called Seeds of Democracy that was administered by the U.S. nonprofit organization ISAR under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) from 1993 to 1997. Seeds of Democracy awarded approximately five hundred small grants (up to $5,000, for a total of about $1 million) to environmental NGOs throughout Russia. The competition process required indigenous groups to submit project proposals. All proposals that secured grants were indigenous ideas and subject to minimal guidelines from ISAR (no commercial ventures, no purely scientific projects, preference to projects that benefit the community at large or have a policy angle). Over time, groups seeking funding through the Seeds of Democracy project, having become aware of ISAR's preferences, tended to tailor their project proposals to include community-at-large or policy elements. Thus indigenous and imported ideas eventually were mixed. ISAR itself did not become substantively involved in any of the funded projects; it merely acted as a funnel (albeit an interested party) for grant money.

B:PROJECT FINANCING FOR IMPORTED IDEAS

In 1991–1992 Battelle Memorial Institute in Washington, D.C., established the Center for Energy Efficiency (CENEF) in Moscow. Several U.S. government agencies and U.S.-based foundations, including the World Wildlife Fund and the MacArthur Foundation, provided seed money. The basic concepts underlying CENEF—energy conservation by both industrial and household consumers and promoting collaboration on energy issues among regional administrations, industrial energy consumers, the media, and the public—originated primarily with CENEF's U.S.-based founders. By the late 1990s CENEF had become a self-sustaining nonprofit organization. CENEF spent most of its seed money in the first few years of operation and developed a client-based, contractual approach to its subsequent financing. With several subcontracted projects from Battelle (most of which originated with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) and many new contracts with the World Bank, the United Nations' Environment Program, and—most important—various Russian regional administrations and municipalities, CENEF has become a highly skilled nonprofit consulting group dedicated to energy and environmental issues.[19] As such, it stands as a positive example of a self-sustaining project that was originally created and financed with grants from Western sources.

C: INTERACTIVE ASSISTANCE FOR INDIGENOUS IDEAS

In the late 1990s the U.S.-based nonprofit group Sacred Earth Network and its Russian partner, Ekotok, responded to indigenous requests for assistance by developing a regional organization for the environmental movement all over Eurasia. Until then, Sacred Earth–Ekotok had been in the business of giving computers and communications equipment to more than four hundred environmental NGOs in the former Soviet Union and running training seminars on electronic communications. In regions such as the North Caucasus, Kamchatka, and southern Siberia, Sacred Earth–Ekotok trains regional environmental NGOs that wish to cooperate and become better coordinated among themselves. The goal is to create coalitions among NGOs, regional authorities, and the public to better address environmental issues that cannot be solved by a single organization.

D:INTERACTIVE ASSISTANCE FOR IMPORTED IDEAS

There are many good examples of interactive assistance for imported ideas. The most obvious is the professional training performed by many NGOs, such as ISAR and a Russian-American nonprofit organization called Golubka that specializes

in NGO training. Such training consists of lessons in strategic planning, tactics, and the identification and use of human, informational, and financial resources. One indicator of the wholly imported nature of these ideas is that in a popular handbook for Russian environmental groups, the terms *strategic planning*, *fund-raising*, and *press releases* are translated (transliterated) as *strategicheskoe planirovanie*, *fandraizing*, and *press-relizy*.[20] Training of this kind has been so widespread that some Russian activists, previously trainees, now specialize in training others.

Another example of the strategy of interactive assistance for imported ideas is the way in which Green Cross Russia (a chapter of the worldwide environmental advocacy organization Green Cross International [GCI] founded by Mikhail Gorbachev at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit) has achieved a promising level of cooperation with the Russian army and other state organs in Russia. One of GCI's global programs addresses the environmental legacy of wars, especially the cold war. To this end GCI seeks to mitigate the social, environmental, and economic consequences of chemical and nuclear contamination from military buildup. Green Cross Russia, responsible for implementing this program in Russia, has forged an official agreement of cooperation with the army, which subsequently initiated its first public outreach program on environmental issues. Green Cross Russia has also successfully concluded a cooperative agreement with the Ministry of Atomic Energy, which has, as a result, granted much greater public access to information about Russia's nuclear power and weapons industry. Other NGOs and the public have thus all benefited from greater access to environmentally sensitive information.

INFLUENCE AND LIMITATIONS

Citizen advocacy groups committed to environmental issues in Russia played an uneven role in the transition to democracy during the 1990s. Before the mid-1980s such groups did not exist in the Soviet Union. Gorbachev's liberalization policies allowed the first mass-mobilized, antistate protest movements to emerge. Because of the confluence of the interests of environmentalists, nationalists, prodemocracy activists, and others, Soviet citizens in the mid- to late 1980s came together, formed autonomous organizations, and helped bring about transformative political and economic changes. Given environmentalists' scientific bent, state authorities often viewed environmental groups as the least overtly "political" and therefore the safest, of all protest groups. Nationalists, human rights proponents, and others often joined environmental protest movements partially out of shared interests but also partially as a cover for more overtly political activities.[21]

Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, however, environmental advocacy groups in Russia have dramatically weakened and are far less populist. Although

thousands of environmental NGOs may now be active in Russia, most are local, small, often short lived, and frequently oriented around only a single issue.[22] The environmental movement in Russia has tended to be fragmented, weak, and strapped for cash.

Since Putin's ascendance, environmental NGOs in Russia have come under increasing pressure from the federal authorities. Many groups have reported being harassed by the Prosecutor General's Office and by police and security forces, taking their cue from Russia's KGB-reared leader. In the summer of 1999, for instance, Putin made public statements charging, without evidence, that Russian environmental NGOs were engaged in espionage.[23]

However ominous these developments are for the third sector and democracy overall in Russia, the rise and rapid fall in influence of environmental NGOs well predates most of the harassment of environmentalists by the federal authorities.[24] While this harassment has no doubt contributed to the weakness of the environmental movement, the stark contrast between the vigor of the movement in the late Soviet period and its decline in the post-Soviet period is primarily attributable to numerous, mutually reinforcing factors, all of which bear on the ability of Western NGOs to assist in the development of the movement. These factors include a weak state, the economic crisis, "movement surrogacy," and the loss of many of the movement's early leaders.

First, the state's weakness has tended to stunt most third-sector groups in Russia. If the third sector is to develop into a robust network of institutions mediating between state and society, it needs solidly institutionalized procedures for governance and advocacy. Citizens' groups also need a coherent target audience within the state to cooperate with or confront. If third-sector groups are to be able to articulate their interests through established channels and acquire real influence over legislative and policy decisions, the state must be effective and institutionalize procedures for governance. The weakness of the state therefore has weakened many segments of would-be civil society in their efforts to participate in government. Although not in anyway the goal, Putin's efforts at strengthening the state, including the empowerment of Federal Security Service (one of the successors to the KGB) and the promotion of many individuals from the security services, may inadvertently force environmentalists to be more organized.

Second, the economic crisis in Russia has undermined the environmental movement's public support. Most ordinary citizens who, a dozen or so years ago, might have taken to the streets to protest the construction of a nuclear power plant in Gorky (now Nizhni Novgorod) or a biochemical factory in Kazan, have since become far more concerned with sustaining themselves and their families through an economic depression. The crisis especially affects towns in which a single (often polluting) factory employs the entire population.

Third, the early contributing factor of "movement surrogacy" has vanished. When the environmental cause was considered relatively safe in the late Soviet

period, nationalists, democracy and human rights advocates, and others often folded their antistate activities into the environmental protest movement. Since 1992, however, with the breakup of the Soviet Union, nationalists and democracy advocates either achieved their goals or no longer need the cover of the environmental movement.[25] Thus the environmental movement in Russia today has been greatly weakened by abandonment.

Fourth, the movement has suffered what has been called both "decapitation through success" or "the green lift."[26] Many leaders of the environmental movement who rose to prominence in the 1980s left to run for office or were appointed to executive positions in regional or national administrations. A notable example is Boris Nemtsov, who was an environmental activist and later became the governor of Nizhni Novgorod oblast, then a deputy prime minister under Boris Yeltsin, and now is a Duma deputy and party leader. The loss of such activists deprived the movement of some of its most charismatic organizers.

These factors affect not only indigenous environmental advocacy groups in Russia but Western assistance efforts as well. While external actors cannot readily address movement surrogacy and decapitation by success, they can address, if not solve, the weak state and the economic crisis. Some Western groups seeking to assist the development of Russian environmental advocacy groups do take such broad-based issues into consideration, but many do not. Assistance programs that do not explicitly consider these overarching political and economic factors may be helping third-sector groups, but their influence, and that of the third-sector groups they assist, is inherently limited.

INFLUENCE

All the Western NGOs under consideration, no matter which strategies they used, helped to develop environmental NGOs in Russia. Whether they funded projects, built capacity, provided training, dropped equipment, or engaged in a cooperative activity, foreign donors greatly aided Russian environmental NGOs to become more strategic, professional, and embedded in a network, both national and transnational. Without computers and communications equipment from the West, for example, Russian environmental NGOs would continue to work in isolation. Given that the vast territory of Russia stretches over eleven time zones, the transportation and communications infrastructures are of poor quality, and money for equipment is simply nonexistent, Russian environmental groups would still be working in a virtual vacuum were it not for foreign assistance.[27] While NGOs in other postcommunist countries also lack a good communications system, the sheer magnitude of the Russian landmass, as well as the historical emphasis on vertical communication between center and region at the expense of horizontal communication among regions, considerably magnifies the problem.

In the post-Soviet period interactive strategies have had the most influence on both third-sector development and the environment by emphasizing strategy and professionalism, coalition building among all sectors, and an overt environmental agenda. Less important is whether the recipient groups are grassroots or (nonstate) elite. An interactive, explicitly environmental strategy with imported ideas affects both the development of third-sector groups and multisectoral environmental coalitions and environmental policies more directly than does a general strategy of funding the projects of third-sector groups, including environmental ones.

When asked to consider the counterfactual—what would be the shape of the Russian environmental NGO community today without foreign assistance?—representatives of several different Russian groups said that while the number of indigenous NGOs would be much smaller, and their range of activity much narrower, the absence of foreign aid would also eliminate the so-called grant junkies or fictitious organizations.[28] Such groups exist for the sole purpose of receiving foreign grants in order to carry out some minimal level of work that appears to justify their continued survival. The problem of the grant junkies is one encountered mainly by foreign foundations engaged in project funding rather than interactive cooperation. Western groups that team up with Russian NGOs obviously have a much closer relationship with the indigenous groups and can evaluate their utility and level of effort more critically and accurately.

Interactive cooperation also provides a more direct mechanism for transferring Western ideas, specifically the key concepts of strategic professionalism and multisectoral coalition building. While funding noninteractive projects may also encourage the transfer of such ideas into practice, a group that receives money may give only lip service to such ideas in order to receive the grant. In an interactive environment, on the other hand, the Western group is working alongside and influencing the practices and ideas of the recipient group.

When Ecologia, for example, first introduced to its Russian recipient groups the concept of building coalitions—among NGOs, local or regional government organs, industrial enterprises, and others—the groups treated it as an alien idea, preferring instead to work almost exclusively either with other NGOs or with like-minded intellectuals and scientists. After several years of cooperative activity, however, plus Ecologia's practice of having its Moscow office work only with NGOs willing to engage in such coalition building, the recipient NGOs now treat regional coalition building as standard operating procedure. In contrast, large-scale noninteractive grant programs, while typically able to distribute aid to many more organizations, have less direct influence over the recipient groups' ideas and operations.

Coalition building begins to address some problems associated with the political and economic transformations occurring in post-Soviet Russia. Of the four factors that limit the influence of Western NGOs on the environment in

Russia, coalition building addresses three: the weakness of the state with respect to industrial and commercial interests, the autonomy of the state with respect to its citizenry, and the link between economic and environmental problems. To some degree each Western NGO engaged in a specifically environmental agenda espoused a coalition-building approach, with the exception of protest-oriented groups such as Greenpeace or the Rainbow Keepers. Foreign funders with agendas oriented toward the third sector in general tended not to stress the importance of coalition building to the same degree as those with environmental agendas. This may be a result of the less targeted, more diffuse goal orientation of organizations assisting third-sector development versus the more targeted and specific orientation of organizations assisting the environment.

A representative of the World Wide Fund for Nature, for instance, explained that the WWF is trying to change the overall attitude toward environmental protection in Russia. Instead of treating the environment as a set of discrete issues solvable on a technical level by a single responsible actor (such as a polluting factory or a regional environment department), the WWF is promoting "ecoregion-based conservation," a more holistic approach in which all sectors—state, industry, media, the public—cooperatively engage in environmental strategizing and problem solving. Thus WWF strongly encourages the local NGOs with which it works, usually in an interactive way, to adopt such a holistic, coalition-building approach.

Similarly, the Green Cross promotes the idea of "cooperation, not confrontation." The executive director of Green Cross Russia noted that this is an international idea. Originating at Green Cross International headquarters in Switzerland, the concept has filtered into Green Cross Russia through interactive cooperation and even out into the hinterland of Russia to affect the behavior of other Russian environmental NGOs.[29] Green Cross Russia thinks of itself as an intermediary between public and state and thus as a spearhead of the so-called pale green movement in Russia. Its cooperation with the authorities does not go uncriticized, however. Some environmental groups that prefer protest to forming multisectoral alliances have branded the Green Cross and other coalition-building groups "collaborators."

Coalition building is being promoted at the local, regional, and national level. Regionally, for example, Ecologia's Volga River monitoring network links six or seven areas along the Volga. In each area Ecologia has given NGOs portable water-monitoring equipment that provides immediate in-field results. It has required the recipient NGOs to work collaboratively with local municipalities, local enterprises, and each other. The Green Cross and the WWF also engage in coalition building at the national level. For example, representatives of the Green Cross and WWF are key participants in a series of regular round-table meetings in Moscow on environmental and political issues. High-level state decision makers, such as the head of the former Goskomekologia, Viktor

Danilov-Danilyan, and members of the Duma ecology committee, frequently attend these meetings. Such participation involves the Green Cross and the WWF in the national and even international policy-making process.

The concept of strategic professionalism is another key imported idea and one that practically every training program sows in the third sector. Because this concept affects the operation of indigenous NGOs at the most minute as well as the broadest level, its successful adoption requires specific training. Western groups involved exclusively in project financing have little or no influence on the strategic thinking or professionalism of recipient groups, beyond perhaps favoring proposals from organizations that appear to be more strategic or professional. While such a preference may, over time, make itself known to the grant-seeking NGO community and may therefore encourage NGOs to become more strategic and professional, a more direct and influential way to foster strategic professionalism is through interactive training programs or internships at the foreign funders.

LIMITATIONS AND UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

The most important limitations on the success of Western NGOs with respect to environmental issues in Russia derive from the weakness of the state, citizen participation channels that remain unstable and unestablished, and economic and environmental problems that are bound together. If assistance to indigenous environmental NGOs is understood to comprise two separate but related goals—the development of postcommunist third-sector groups and the progressive resolution of environmental issues—it is manifestly clear that greater progress has been achieved on the first front than on the second.

Western assistance has had many unintended consequences, some of which are unique to the environmental community (or even unique to the environmental community in Russia) and some of which all advocacy communities presumably share.

Among the unintended consequences that most assistance programs share, regardless of issue orientation, is that of resentment of recipient groups when aid programs do not consider local realities. This reflects the shortcomings of importing a single blueprint from abroad. An example of such a blueprint was the Regional Environment Center (REC), established in Budapest in the early 1990s with money from the European Union, foreign governments, and private foundations. The REC is an information clearinghouse and central organizing point for environmental advocacy groups and citizens' initiatives throughout Central and Eastern Europe. While not without its critics, the REC has become a key actor in regional environmental politics.

In 1995–1996 Western donors, led by the European Union, began to talk about establishing a REC-like organization in Moscow that would coordinate

nonstate environmental activities in the former Soviet Union. The idea of a Russian REC provoked considerable resistance from the Russian environmental NGO community. Several well-known representatives of the Russian environmental NGO community explained that simply importing an idea that worked in Budapest in the early 1990s to Russia in the late 1990s would not work. The two settings, they argued, were different; whereas the Central and Eastern European societies of the early 1990s embraced the organizing ability of the REC (as well as that of the international community in general), the Russian environmental community of the late 1990s was already quite established and organized and did not feel the need for a centrally controlled external organizer. For instance, it already had the Socio-Ecological Union, an indigenously established umbrella group for citizens' environmental initiatives throughout the former Soviet Union. In addition, Russian environmentalists strongly opposed the design proposed for the Russian REC: It was to be partially administered by Goskomekologia, which many Russian NGOs thought was not NGO friendly and was far from being a neutral arbiter. The former chairman of the board of the nongovernmental Biodiversity Conservation Center in Moscow noted, "The REC was a good idea ten years ago in Eastern Europe, because the third sector there was still in the early stages of development, but this is no longer the case in Russia. Establishment of a Russian REC is a matter of contention, fiefdoms, and overlapping activities now . . . . It would be better to use already existing organizations rather than to create a new semi-governmental bureaucracy."[30]

Another common unintended consequence arises from a paradox associated with using indigenous expertise. Representatives of nearly every Western NGO as well as government aid programs spoke of the necessity, often learned the hard way, of using local experts in their in-country activities. Russian NGO representatives too noted that all too often well-paid Western consultants, flown in to administer programs in regions they knew little or nothing about, spent the vast majority of their time learning the local realities, writing reports, and sending information back to the home office, meanwhile contributing nothing of significance to the actual project or the region.

Given the necessity of using indigenous expertise, it was therefore striking that many indigenous NGO representatives also sounded bells of caution when asked about the way in which Western groups used local expertise. Sometimes this vitiates the local experts' intellectual independence: Local experts may be so happy to be paid for their labor that they may say precisely what their foreign funders want to hear. Even the possibility of this may lead local state or industrial organizations to distrust Western-funded indigenous experts, thereby depriving them of the very influence that they seek to develop.

More frequent is a problem encountered by Western groups that use local experts on their grant-making boards. Local experts who are called upon to

make decisions on grants and awards are generally well connected to the local advocacy community and may be biased. Such partisanship may lead to resentment and splits within the grant-seeking NGO community. Foreign funders encountering this problem of peer review have had to find ways of stemming partisanship while still drawing on local expertise. For example, ISAR has five to eleven local members on the boards of each of its regional offices but rotates board membership regularly to avoid cliques and bias.

Among the unintended consequences unique to the environmental community is the problem of science-oriented environmentalists who are opposed to using the approach of strategic professionalism. In the perestroika era many environmentalists were affiliated with Academy of Sciences institutes, industrial branch ministry institutes, or universities that stressed scientific, not political, orientations to environmental problem solving. In the 1990s, however, when many Western NGOs were training Russian environmental NGOs to become more professional, politically strategic, and organized, a subset of the environmental movement opposed what it perceived as the abandonment of traditional scientific approaches to environmental protection. Because the Western groups were the most visible and active trainers in Western management techniques, this subset of the environmental movement began to view much of the contact and assistance from the West as superficial and ill spent. The rift in these two sets of groups has, however, more recently diminished, as communications have expanded and those on both sides have learned from each other.

Another common unintended consequence arises where regional or territorial systems of administering assistance inhibit environmental effectiveness. Many environmental issues are by their very nature transboundary. Thus many NGO representatives noted that establishing horizontal communications networks is critical and that NGOs in different locales must work together. Western NGOs, as part of a transnational network, have been successful at fostering horizontal communications networks by donating computers and communications equipment to groups all over Eurasia. However, indigenous NGOs feel that the administration of foreign aid programs by region or territory may inhibit interregional and even international cooperation. For example, USAID gave ISAR two separate grants for its Seeds of Democracy program, one for the Moscow office and one for the Vladivostok office. Each office administered its own grant program in its own region and received its own funding. Though both offices have since become legally independent not only from ISAR headquarters in Washington, D.C., but from each other, some grant recipients expressed concern that the territorial divisions of the grant administration system encourages groups to be active and collaborative only within their own region.

The same logic holds for funding programs that are administered according to country borders. To skirt this problem an active transboundary environmental association has formed in the Leningrad and Karelia regions of the Russian

northwest, incorporating participant groups from Scandinavia, the Baltic countries, and neighboring regions within Russia. Transboundary associations can compete for funds from a growing number of sources, pool their resources, and work more effectively on environmental problems that ignore borders.

HOW WESTERN NGOS EVALUATE THEIR OWN ACTIVITIES

Asked how Western NGOs evaluate their own assistance programs, nearly every respondent noted the extreme difficulty of evaluation. It tends to be performed along two axes: according to the terms of the original project proposal itself and according to the broader criteria set by the funding organization. The first sort of evaluation is more straightforward. Western groups engaged in noninteractive project financing have required funding recipients to submit reports upon completion of their projects or at the end of the funding cycle, for instance.

What is more difficult is taking account of the broader concerns of each organization. For example, Charities Aid Foundation tries to analyze each project's influence on its region. ISAR looks for indications of information sharing across groups and the creation of linkages among groups. Ecologia analyzes the level of influence on public participation and decision making in the regions in which it works. While all the organizations also evaluate projects strictly according to the terms of the original project proposal, these broader concerns reach closer to the core of the Western groups' raison d'être. Yet they are often too intangible to evaluate at such close range, and several respondents argued that even a decade in the field is not enough time for evaluation.

Evaluation of noninteractive project-financing programs by their funders tends to be more formal than evaluation of interactive projects. Recipients generally submit reports, and the Western group's board or staff meets regularly to review the reports and discuss evaluation criteria. Interactive activity tends to be evaluated more informally and irregularly. The head of an NGO using interactive strategies (Ecologia) noted that, since concrete results often appear well *after* submission of the final project report, evaluation has to be flexible and long term. Any evaluation in search of tangible short-term results is an exercise in futility. This is partly a result of the nature of the activity being funded (environmental advocacy), partly a result of the transitional political and economic context in which Russian NGOs work, and partly because of the short amount of time that these assistance programs have been running.

Short-term evaluation in search of concrete tangible results was not common; I did not find a single pure example of such thinking among the organizations that I researched. All the Western groups that I considered sought some evidence of concrete results and incorporated their own broader social or political concerns into assessment. Donors' self-evaluations could be more useful if they

factored in considerations of more holistic, coalition-building strategies of benefit to both environmental and sociopolitical objectives. In other words, current self-evaluation systems work as well as possible, given current strategies. However, were strategies changed to incorporate the suggestions made in this chapter, evaluation systems would benefit from criteria for measuring successful coalition building and the influence of such coalition building on both environmental and sociopolitical issues.

LESSONS

One of the clearest lessons from the environmental movement in Russia is that citizen initiatives that promote the onset of democratization do not necessarily promote the consolidation of democracy. A common pair of objectives of Western NGOs (excluding those organizations that are purely protest groups) is, first, to help indigenous NGOs to develop into well-managed organizations in their own right and, second, to help them forge new, stable channels for citizen participation in the political system, thereby helping to consolidate the new Russian democracy.

These intertwined objectives, especially the first, have met with some degree of success in Russia. Russian environmental groups in the first years of the twenty-first century are far more strategic, professional, networked, and sophisticated than they were just a few years earlier, and foreign aid in multiple forms and from multiple sources is partly responsible for the transformation.[31] Observers interested in the future of the Russian environmental NGO community will have to wait and watch, however, given the relatively more repressive atmosphere of the early Putin era. Notwithstanding the recent acquittal of military-officer-turned-environmentalist Alexander Nikitin, who was charged with espionage for publicizing the environmental hazards associated with Russia's decommissioned nuclear submarines around the Kola Peninsula, an apparently increasing suspicion of environmentalists may be the wave of the future in Russia. An inauspicious sign may be the rule announced in May 2001 by the Russian Academy of Sciences that Russian scientists must report to academy officials all contact with foreigners.

It remains unclear whether Russians really have established new stable channels of citizen participation and to what degree foreign aid is responsible. Because most Western NGOs have been active in a substantial way in Russia only since 1993, evaluation of their influence on the political process is difficult because it is better measured in decades or even generations. The future of Russian democracy is by no means a given. Despite Putin's high popularity ratings, the ordinary Russian citizen still greatly mistrusts the government regardless of who is in power and has suffered harsh economic consequences as a result of the quasi transition to market capitalism that is associated with the quasi transition to democracy.

Despite these inhibiting factors, citizen participation channels are being forged at both regional and national levels. Western groups have been at least partly responsible, particularly those engaged in interactive programs of coalition building and working to achieve their goals within the political system itself, rather than resorting to protest from outside. One of the most promising citizen initiatives is a Russian nonprofit environmental law group called Ecojuris, which in 1998 celebrated the first-ever supreme court victory for public ecological interests over an organ of the Russian state that was violating its own laws (the Federal Forest Service). The success of such legitimate means for citizens to express their interest demonstrates that channels for participation are taking root. However, the process of establishing such channels is still in the early stages.

The obvious objective of helping to improve Russia's environment has met with far less success. The weakness and corruption of the state with respect to powerful industrial and commercial lobbies, the continual instability and flux of state institutions and elites, and the link between environmental and economic issues all constrain the influence of Western groups seeking to affect environmental conditions in Russia. Aid programs that explicitly factor these issues into program design are more likely, in the long term, to have a direct effect on improving the environment in Russia.

EPILOGUE

The evolving realities of the Putin era serve to underscore precisely why the strategies identified here as the most effective—in particular, multisectoral coalition building, especially at the regional level—will continue to be so; indeed, they are perhaps even more crucial now than during the Yeltsin era. Many observers note that Putin has presided over an increasingly illiberal regime. Indeed, in a recent survey two-thirds of all Russians interviewed had difficulty labeling their society democratic.[32] Crackdowns on NGOs of all types, as well as the independent media, are increasingly common.

Since Putin's ascendance, many advocacy groups have reported being harassed by police, security, and tax agents, some of whom have been known to barge unannounced into NGO offices and confiscate files while dressed in ski masks and bearing assault weapons. In late 1999 authorities detained several environmentalists for questioning in connection with the bombings of Moscow apartment buildings; these people reported being "interrogated for hours and urged to 'confess' links to terrorists."[33] Though environmental activists had been a target of systematic, but usually low-level, harassment for several years before the Putin era, the pattern has become clearer and more common since he took office. Most observers, both inside and outside the country, believe that this is occurring not because Russian officials necessarily think that environmental ad-

vocates are terrorist bombers or foreign spies but because they "see the strengthening of *civil society* as a security threat" more generally.[34]

Bureaucratic obstacles have also increased for Russian NGOs. According to Russian law, all NGOs, charities, religious organizations, and other societal associations must register with the Ministry of Justice, and they must re-register periodically. In the late 1990s, during a phase of re-registration representatives of these civil society organizations lodged numerous complaints with the Ministry of Justice and in the media regarding the near impossibility or even the outright impossibility of complying with the onerous re-registration requirements. By some estimates fewer than half of all national organizations were able to re-register with federal authorities, and the widespread perception is that the process is designed to weed out groups critical of the government.[35]

If this pattern of harassment continues for the foreseeable future, or gets worse, the future of Russia's third sector may be in jeopardy, but the authorities would have to significantly step up the harassment to squelch the third sector as thoroughly as in Soviet times. It is worth noting that the number of third-sector organizations has continued to grow, their international and domestic connections have continued to thrive, and the many cases of groups unable to re-register with the Ministry of Justice do not seem to have seriously repressed the functioning of the sector as a whole. In other words, while government harassment of the third sector has probably slowed the growth of the sector or minimally curtailed its activities, it does not seem to have arrested its growth altogether or put a stop to its activities. So despite the obstacles, and in the absence of a complete reversal of the laws allowing Russian citizens to engage freely in societal associations, the third sector indeed seems to be holding its own. Perhaps it would be stronger and more effective were the state supportive and mobilizing, but even in the face of adversity it has not vanished.

Parts of the third sector have perhaps grown even more determined. In the fall of 2000 Russian environmental NGOs, assisted by several Western NGOs, organized the largest, most widespread, and most visible action since the anti-nuclear protests of a decade earlier. In response both to Putin's abolishment in May 2000 of the State Committee on the Environment and to the Ministry of Atomic Energy (MinAtom) plan to import as many as twenty tons of nuclear waste from around the world in order to finance the construction of new nuclear power stations, environmental and public health advocates, along with Yabloko Party activists and numerous schoolteachers from across Russia collected 2.5 million signatures in more than sixty regions to force the Russian government to hold a referendum. Importing nuclear waste required a change in Russian law by the Duma. The activists concerned about the poor safety record of and history of obfuscation by the Russian nuclear energy sector believed they had collected more than enough signatures to comply with the 1995 Law on Referendum, which requires at least two million. Numerous regional and

Central Election Commission officials, however, upon reviewing the petition and signatures in November 2000, invalidated more than 600,000 of them, thereby reducing the number of valid signatures to 1.9 million, just short of the number required to get a referendum on the ballot.

As of mid-2001 there were no indications that Putin would reinstate the State Committee on the Environment, and the Duma had approved MinAtom's plan to import nuclear waste, which Putin ultimately supported.However, approval by the Duma was difficult—its second reading was postponed twice—in part because of the public's evident and vocal objections. In addition, Putin sacked his minister of atomic energy, Yevgeny Adamov, who was under a cloud of corruption allegations.

Did the activists win? From a policy perspective, clearly not. But from a longer-term perspective, one could argue that the Russian people are more aware of the proximate environmental issues; that environmental NGOs all over Russia joined forces for a common cause, thereby enhancing their levels of communication and cooperation; that a news story that the domestic and foreign press might once have largely overlooked received more coverage than it would have otherwise; and that the public sent a message to decision makers in Moscow, whether they chose to heed it or not. Indeed, by postponing the second reading of the bill, the Duma unexpectedly acknowledged that it had heard the message, even if it eventually ignored it. Several Western NGOs contributed to this effort, and while the outcome was surely not the one desired, Western assistance nonetheless contributed to the long-term factors just mentioned. While the realities of the Putin era clearly make successful assistance by Western NGOs more difficult, those that engage in multisectoral coalition building and that emphasize strategic professionalism are less likely than others to see their efforts marginalized.

NOTES

1. U.S. Agency for International Development, "Foreign Donor Assistance for Environmental Protection and Natural Resource Management in the Russian Federation," report available from USAID, Moscow, January 1988, p. 1.

2. D. J. Peterson, "Institutions and the Environment in Transition-Era Russia" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1996), p. 164.

3. See Peter Burnell, *Foreign Aid in a Changing World* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1997), esp. chap. 11, "To Russia with Love," pp. 212–30.

4. For a discussion of the strength of the environmental movement during the perestroika period, see Jane I. Dawson, *Econationalism, Antinuclear Activism, and National Identity in Russia, Lithuania, and Ukraine* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996). See also Charles E. Ziegler, "Environmental Politics and Policy Under Perestroika," in Judith B. Sedaitis and Jim Butterfield, eds., *Perestroika from Below*, pp. 113–31 (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1991).

5. In pre-Soviet times Russian writers sometimes reflected the reverence for nature often attributed to the Russian *narod* (people or nation). Those with Slavophile tendencies, such as Lev Tolstoi, wrote of a "naturalist attachment to the land" (Charles E. Ziegler, *Environmental Policy in the USSR* [Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987], p. 7). In the early part of the twentieth century, scientists and engineers, even some working on the early Soviet industrialization projects, demonstrated great concern for the social and ecological consequences of industry. By about 1930, however, most of these nontechnocrats had been silenced in one way or another. In an insightful account of an important and vocal engineer who was executed in 1929 by order of the party, Loren Graham shows how Soviet technology and industry became fatally flawed when the social-minded criticism of engineers such as Peter Palchinsky went unheeded. See Loren R. Graham, *The Ghost of the Executed Engineer* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993). Even into the 1930s, when Stalin's terror began, some Russian scientists and philosophers, such as the Reverend Pavel Florensky, publicized ecological problems arising from heavy industrialization campaigns. See Ruben A. Mnatsakanian, *Environmental Legacy of the Former Soviet Republics* (Edinburgh, Scotland: Center for Human Ecology, Institute of Ecology & Resource Management, University of Edinburgh, 1992).

6. The activist S. R. Fomichev describes the ecopress during Soviet times: "There were practically no critical materials on global ecological issues (unless directly about capitalist nature and useful as propaganda). Demographics, public health issues, industrial influences on nature and man were not allowed." From S. R. Fomichev, introduction to I. Yu. Belov and S. R. Fomichev, eds., *Zelenaya Bibliografia, Pereodicheskie ekologischeskie izdaniya Severnoi Yevrazii* (Green Bibliography, Periodic Ecological Publications of Northern Eurasia) (Moscow: Tsentr okhrany dikoi prirody, 1996), p. 8.

7. The president of VOOP for many years was Nikolai Ovsyannikov, who was also the first deputy minister for land reclamation and water management for the Soviet Russian republic. This ministry was known to be a blatant and major disrupter of the ecological balance in many regions. See John Massey Stewart, ed., *The Soviet Environment: Problems, Policies, and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 3.

8. D. J. Peterson, *Troubled Lands: The Legacy of Soviet Environmental Destruction* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1993), p. 160.

9. Oksana Yu. Tsitzer, "History and Perspective of Shaping Federal Environmental Policy in the Russian Federation," *Toward a Sustainable Russia*, Bulletin of the Center for Russian Environmental Policy, Moscow, June 1996, p. 10.

10. See Peterson, "Institutions and the Environment,"pp. 67–72.

11. The state committees were hydrometeorology, water resources, forestry, geodesy and cartography, geology and mineral resources, and the Arctic and Antarctica.

12. Tsitzer, "History and Perspective," pp. 10–11.

13. Irina Khalyi, Institute of Sociology, Russian Academy of Sciences, interview by author, Moscow, July 1998.

14. Peterson, "Institutions and the Environment,"pp. 63–64.

15. Interview of Olga Yakovleva and Vera Mischenko of Ecojuris, *Russian Conservation News*, spring 1998, p. 13.

16. Ibid., pp. 13–14.

17. Randy Kritkausky, Ecologia, telephone interview by author, August 1998.

18. Yakovleva and Mischenko interview, pp. 13–14.

19. Inna Gritsevich, CENEF, interview by author, Moscow, June 1998.

20. Irina Khalyi et al., eds., *Aktsii ekologicheskogo dvizhenia, Rukovodstvo k deistviyu* (Actions of the Ecological Movement, Leadership to Action). Moscow: Programma Maatschappelijke Transformatie, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 1996.

21. For an extended discussion see Dawson, *Econationalism*.

22. Peterson, *Troubled Lands*, p. 207.

23. Aleksandr Gamov and Yevgenia Uspenskogo, "Vladimir Putin: Gosudarstvennii perevorot Rossii ne grozit" (Vladimir Putin: No Threat of a Government Revolution in Russia), *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, July 8, 1999, pp. 8–9. See also Julie Corwin, "Environmentalists Fear More Pressure from Federal Authorities," pt. 1, *RFE/RL* March 2, 2000, http://www.rferl.org/newsline/2000/03/020300.html (November 9, 2001).

24. Several cases of severe harassment of environmentalists are well known. See, for example, Thomas Nilsen and Jon Gauslaa, "How the KGB Violates Citizens' Rights: The Case of Alexander Nikitin," *Demokratizatsiya* 5, no. 3 (Summer 1997): 407–21.

25. For more on this see Dawson, *Econationalism*.

26. Michael Bernhard uses the phrase "decapitation through success" in "Civil Society After the First Transition," *Communist and Postcommunist Studies* 29, no. 3 (September 1996): 309–30. Sergei Baranovsky of Green Cross Russia introduced me to the term "green lift" when I interviewed him in Moscow in June 1998.

27. Isolation still persists for many groups. As of the late 1990s, only ten of Green Cross Russia's twenty-three branch organizations in Russia had telephones and e-mail.

28. Ivan Timofeev of Golubka introduced me to the term "grant junky" when I interviewed him in Moscow in July 1998.

29. Baranovsky interview.

30. Evgeny Shvarts, Biodiversity Conservation Center, interview by author, Moscow, June 1998.

31. Tatiana Zhdanova of the MacArthur Foundation made this argument when I interviewed her in Moscow in July 1998. See also Initiative for Social Action and Renewal in Eurasia, "A Brief Overview of the Environmental Movement in the Newly Independent States" (report prepared for the NGO/Donor Workshop, Szentendre, Hungary, May 12–14, 1997), pp. 8–9; Institute of Natural Resource Management, "Evaluation of the Impact Made by the USAID Assistance Program on Environmental Activism and the Non-Governmental Organization Movement," report for USAID, Moscow, 1997, p. 8.

32. The All-Russian Center of Public Opinion Studies (VTsIOM) conducted this survey in October 2000. See Vladimir Shlapentokh, "Putin's Uniqueness in Russian History: The Prospects for Prolonged Corruption in a Nondemocratic Society," January 9, 2001, David Johnson's *Russia List*, http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/5017.html##9 (November 9, 2001).

33. Sarah E. Mendelson, "The Putin Path: Are Human Rights in Retreat?" testimony prepared for hearings before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in

Europe, U.S. Congress, 106th Cong., 2d sess., May 23, 2000; see also Sarah E. Mendelson, "The Putin Path: Civil Liberties and Human Rights in Retreat," *Problems of Post-communism* 47, no. 5 (September–October 2000): 3–12.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid. Some estimates have put the number of successfully re-registered groups far lower. See, for example, "Briefing Report: Russian Democracy Under Threat," *RFE/RL*, October 24, 2000, http://www.rferl.org/welcome/english/releases/2000/10/6–241000.html (November 12, 2001).