

**On the State of Conservation of the UNESCO World Heritage Property
*Virgin Komi Forests (Russian Federation, No. 719) in 2014***

1. Response of the Russian Federation with regard to Resolution No. 38 COM 7B.78 adopted by the World Heritage Committee

According to Decision No. AKPI14-953 adopted by the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation as of October 01, 2014, the following items were declared invalid on the effective date of the legal decision:

Subparagraph 24 of Paragraph 9 contained in the Regulation on Yugyd Va National Park approved by Decree No. 534 issued by the RF Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment on November 20, 2013 in its part specifically related to determination of whether it is possible for users of the land plots located within the boundaries of the National Park to utilize vehicles off the public-access roads;

Appendix No. 1 Coordinates of Corner Points with regard to Yugyd Va National Park Boundaries in its part specifically related to determination of corner points' coordinates near the Chudnoe Deposit (provision —Coordinates of Corner Points in the Territory of Urban District Municipal Unit (UDMU) (Inta — Chudnoe); Appendix No. 3 Map Outlining Land Use Planning of Yugyd Va National Park Territory in its part specifically related to distinguishing of the Chudnoe Deposit on the mentioned map as the one being outside of the territory occupied by Yugyd Va National Park.

Appellate Ruling of the RF Supreme Court No. APL14-643 as of January 15, 2015 has affirmed the court decision.

In this connection, the concerns of the 35th to 38th sessions of UNESCO World Heritage Committee with regard to the Committee State Party's cancelling its legal remedies for four sections of the Virgin Komi Forests world heritage property's territory by excluding them from Yugyd Va National Park have been satisfied by the moment.

At the Chudnoe Deposit, exploration and other works have not been and are not being conducted — only data processing has been performed at the office. No activities related to gold mining are conducted and planned to be conducted at the site.

Along with this, the updated re-nomination of the Virgin Komi Forests world heritage property, which was submitted to the World Heritage Centre by February 01, 2015, will need to be adjusted in pursuance of the RF Supreme Court's decision.

To ensure guarantees with regard to the Virgin Komi Forests World Heritage property conservation, it is planned to:

- Continue works on creating a protected area (transboundary SPA) on the eastern slope of the Ural mountain range along the property's boundary with the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous District;
- Approve new boundaries of the protected area and related regulations;
- Build a fire and chemical station in Inta section of the Park;
- Complete the procedure of annexing new sections to the territory of the National Park.

2. Information about other current issues related to the World Heritage property conservation

In 2014, 196 inspections related to natural complexes' protection were conducted and 170 measures to prevent forest fires were taken in Yugyd Va Park. All territory of the Park was protected from fires using aircrafts. The Park is equipped with fire-extinguishing means and fire-fighting machinery. Last year, no forest fires were registered in the Park.

Restoration works have been continued for natural complexes in the northern part that were disturbed. Environmental action plans for adjacent land users are being implemented with the assistance of the Park.

Monitoring activities have been continued in the areas as follows:

a) Common animal species monitoring:

Wildlife population density, number of game species per 1,000 ha (according to the data obtained during winter walk-through surveys between 2000 and 2015)

Valued Species	Number of species per 1,000 ha: on the average	Number of species per 1,000 ha: min—max (for the period, years)
Squirrel	9.6	0.41—19.35(15)
Wolf	0.04	0.01—0.097(15)
Common weasel	1.32	0.13—2.69(15)
Polar hare	10.44	1.5—19.38(15)
Marten	0.75	0.36—1.45(15)
Fox	0.06	0.015—0.16(15)
Elk	0.19	0—0.44(15)
Mink	0.92	0.08—1.6(15)
Wolverine	0.04	0.01—0.07(15)
Lynx	0.01	0—0.021(15)
Wood grouse	15.9	5.8—28.8(14)
Black grouse	19.97	8.5—38.6(15)
Hazel grouse	35.97	2.9—80.5(15)
Ptarmigan	20.44	8.64—27.5(5)

Aerial survey of wild reindeer populations: route length within the boundaries of the National Park was equal to 520 km. As compared with the last year figures, the number of species recorded by the survey personnel has increased fourfold.

b) Flora species monitoring:

In the survey, the primary focus was on the territories with high recreational load and Kozhim River basin. Survey results: populations of rare plants are stable.

c) Forest pathology monitoring:

Has been performed on the area of 14,000 ha in recreational zone. No large-scale areas of vermin damage and drying have been revealed.

d) Tourist flow monitoring and recreational load control:

Surveys have been performed in the Podcherem River basin (the most popular route) at the area of 200,000 ha. The average recreational load is within permissible levels.

In 2014, the Park was inscribed on the Uniform Federal Register of Tour Operators. The services are certified. In 2014, the Park attracted 6,000+ visitors, 10% higher than in 2013. In 2014, they constructed 1 new accommodation facility and 5 steam bath houses, installed 36 new information plates, arranged 26 recreational areas and opened 2 new routes. In 2014, Head of the Republic and Director of the Park signed and started to successfully implement the Agreement for Cooperation in the Field of Tourism Development on the territory of Komi Republic. In 2014, the Park continued to implement its business plan for tourism development.

State of natural complexes within Pechora-Ilych State Nature Biosphere Reserve

- Site boundaries of Virgin Komi Forests property (hereinafter referred to as the “Property”) within the boundaries of Pechora-Ilych State Nature Biosphere Reserve site (hereinafter referred to as the “Reserve”) and its buffer zone have remained unchanged. Property conservation is guaranteed by the federal law on SPAs being in force on the territory of the Reserve. FSBI (Federal State Budget Institution) Pechora-Ilych State

Reserve is responsible for the control with regard to the compliance of legal regime existing for reserves. Property conservation within the boundaries of the Reserve's buffer zone is governed by resolutions at the republic level and controlled by the Forestry Commission, Hunting Directorate of the Komi Republic and Dvina-Pechora Territorial Administration of Fishery Supervision Agency.

- No information related to disappearance of fauna and flora species from the territory of the Property is available.
- As a result of research activities carried out by Reserve staff and outside experts, information about new mushroom, lichen and moss species, as well as invertebrates and birds inhabiting the Reserve has been obtained.

New forestry management activities are planned to be implemented on the territory of the Reserve in 2015—2017. In 2013, chemical composition of the snow cover was monitored on the territory of the Reserve. Excessive amounts of polluting substances discharged per unit of area in the submountain part of the Reserve has been revealed as compared with the ones in the lowland, which is due to the long-range transport of pollutants and natural geochemical accumulation resulting from condensation caused by the Ural Mountains. No fires were registered on the territory of the Reserve and its buffer zone in 2014.

Visitors/Tourists

5 eco-routes have been developed and used within the boundaries of the Reserve. In 2014, 634 visitors were at the territory of the Reserve, having walked along the organized routes and passed through cordons. In spite of amazingly beautiful landscapes and natural monuments located within the property, the territory of the Reserve and its buffer zone is still difficult to access by many tourists mainly due to the lack of sufficient transport infrastructure in the region and well-developed eco-routes.

To reduce human impact on natural complexes of the Reserve to a minimum, the activities related to the improvement of existing eco-routes are still in progress and their termination is planned for 2016.

In 2014, security officers working on the territory of the Reserve revealed 75 violations of regulations on natural resources protection and use at the SPA (unlawful presence on the territory of a SPA), that is 11% higher than in 2013. No cases of unlawful hunting and other violations of a legal regime existing for reserves have been identified. Controlling the south-eastern part of the Reserve's boundary is still a key problem related to the Reserve's territory protection. This is a place where most violations of a legal regime existing for reserves have been registered.

Solution to the problem: to control the territory and regulate tourist flows the activities are in progress focused on the arrangement of an additional security station near the head of the Pechora River. Security officers are placing brand new billboards and plates along the boundaries of the Reserve. It is necessary to arrange a protected area of federal significance along the perimeter of the Reserve to increase control over its boundaries, protect valuable geological sites, as well as preserve unique natural complexes of the Verkhnyaya Pechora and Ilycha Rivers.

3. Significant changes within the World Heritage property are expected due to the extension of its boundaries.