

**OIL SPILLS: A PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES’
PERSPECTIVE
THE CASES OF THE KOMI REPUBLIC AND NENETS AUTONOMOUS OKRUG
(RUSSIA)**

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Relationships between indigenous communities and extractive industries is quite known theme in indigenous and human geography studies. However, due to the large number of the indigenous ethnic groups and their distinctiveness the topic stays indeed actual. It is understandable that interactions between indigenous people and extractive companies are numerous in their nature, therefore this thesis, in order to provide a narrower focus, uses oil spills, which are the regularly occurring event in oil-rich regions of Russia, as a particular case. The thesis aims at analysis of the positions taken by indigenous peoples on the matter of oil spills, as well as indigenous and socio-environmental organizations' involvement in debates with authorities and oil companies on this issue and their strategies used in negotiation with extractive industries and local authorities. Two groups covered by the present research are the Nenets and Izhma Komi people, consequently, two regions are presented in the thesis, namely the Republic of Komi and Nenets Autonomous Okrug. The aspect that makes analysis in some way to be comparative is different legal status possessed by two ethnic groups: by the Russian law, the Nenets people are recognized as indigenous small-numbered people, Izhma Komi people, in their turn, are not. The research questions that were set before implementation of research were formulated as: 1) What are the strategies employed by Izhma Komi and Nenets people in relationship with extractive industries on the issue of oil spills? 2) What is the role that the indigenous and native organizations play in the negotiations on the oil spills and overall land and environmental issues with oil extractive companies and authorities?

In order to get information adequate for the objectives of the research, firstly, a literature review was done. Such concepts, as territory, land, land tenure rights, indigenous peoples are introduced and discussed.

Empirical data was obtained via the interviews with the representatives of two public organizations from the Republic of Komi, to wit, Izvatas and Save the Pechora Committee, and a questionnaire filled by a representative of the Union of reindeer herders of Nenets Autonomous Okrug.

The main findings show the differences in Izhma Komi and Nenets people's attitude and behavior on the matter of oil spills. Such differences are recognized in, for example, overall activeness and readiness of people to defend their rights, territory, and environment, and different levels of social mindedness of two groups. Moreover, the study shows the differences in public organizations' negotiating strategies and involvement in debate with extractive companies and authorities, as well as general understanding of the priorities for sustainable development of indigenous and native communities. As the result, Izhma Komi people and public organizations connected with them appear to be far more consistent and active in the debates over and campaigns dedicated to the issue of oil spills, while in relation to the Nenets people, insufficient use of legal instruments they possess as indigenous small-numbered people is determined.

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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	5
2. METHODOLOGY	7
3. COMMUNITIES, INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, TERRITORY, LAND USE AND LAND DEVELOPMENT: LINKING THE CONSTRUCTS.....	10
4. CONTEMPORARY SITUATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION	15
4.1 The legal dimension.....	15
4.2. Indigenous peoples and industrial development.....	17
4.3. Indigenous peoples and extractive industries	20
5. INTRODUCING THE REGIONAL CASES: THE REPUBLIC OF KOMI AND THE NENETS AUTONOMOUS OKRUG	23
5.1. The Komi Republic and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug: background description of the regions.....	24
5.1.1. The Republic of Komi.....	24
5.1.2. The Nenets Autonomous Okrug.....	29
5.2. Izhma Komi and the Nenets people and their indigenous and related organizations	32
5.2.1 Izvatas.....	32
5.2.2. The Nenets.....	36
5.3. Oil industry in the Komi Republic and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug	39
6. ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES GAINED FROM THE INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS.....	45
6.1. The consequences and adverse effects of oil production on Izhma Komi and Nenets communities.....	45
6.2. Public and native organizations involvement in the debates on oil production consequences in the Republic of Komi and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug	48
6.2.1. Public organizations' relationship with regional and local authorities	48
6.2.2 Public organizations and oil companies	53
6.2.3 Cooperation with other public environmental and social organizations of indigenous and native peoples	57
6.2.4 Local population involvement.....	60
7. CONCLUSIONS.....	64
REFERENCES	67
List of literature:	67
List of Internet resources:	70
List of interviews:	75

APPENDICES.....	76
Appendix No. 1. Location of the Komi Republic and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug	76
Appendix No. 2. Finno-ugric, samoyedic, and yukaghir peoples in Russia.....	77
Appendix No. 3. The Pechora River basin	78
Appendix No. 4. The Timan-Pechora basin hydrocarbon province	79
Appendix No. 5. The questionnaire sent to the Union of reindeer herders of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug (in English).....	80
Appendix No. 6. The original questionnaire sent to the Union of reindeer herders of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug (in Russian)	82

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the UN more than 370 million people from approximately 70 countries belong to indigenous communities (United Nations 2006). Despite the obvious differences, one the most common shared similarity among them is their relationship with land they live on. Vitality of land, environment, and surrounding nature are embedded both in their communities' structure and issues, as well as in individual memories, experience, and outlook. At the same time, these lands and territories, which are usually resource-rich, are also point of focus of frequently more powerful players, namely industries. The types of relationship, which may occur between all parties involved, vary a lot worldwide, however, from the perspective of this thesis two cases that involve indigenous communities from the North of the European part of Russia are analyzed.

This thesis particularly focuses on Izhma Komi people originating in the Komi Republic and the Nenets people from Nenets Autonomous Okrug. Despite the existing ethnic differences, two groups share important similarities in traditional activities, i.e. reindeer herding, mixed marriages, and severe places of residence. Nevertheless, one issue that makes them especially interesting subject for studies is their different legal status: among these two groups only the Nenets are recognized as indigenous peoples in Russia. This fact allows one group to use the benefits the laws can offer and simultaneously limits another group from grasping the same benefits. Here it is important to state that although due to the reasons explained in the chapter on methodology the primary group in question is Izhma Komi, it does not exclude the Nenets from the main course of research, but rather limits the scope of research conducted in relation to this group.

Especial attention is paid to operation of the indigenous and native organizations as the representatives of indigenous and native peoples and organizations and bodies that are closely connected with such peoples. Three organizations of such kind are referred in the thesis, namely, interregional public movement Izvatas, non-governmental organization Save the Pechora Committee, both are from the Komi Republic, and the Union of reindeer herders of Nenets Autonomous Okrug.

The special attention in this thesis is paid to the following topics: 1) the consequences of oil extraction and influence of oil production on the lives of the indigenous peoples in the Republic of Komi and Nenets Autonomous Okrug, and 2) indigenous and native organizations'

relationship with extractive industries and local authorities. The comparative analysis between the cases of two aforementioned regions has been implemented.

The aim of the thesis is to acquire a better understanding of differences between interferences between indigenous communities, extractive industries, and local authorities in two regions.

The research questions are formulated accordingly to two aforementioned themes:

1. *What are the strategies employed by Izhma Komi and Nenets people in relationship with extractive industries on the issue of oil spills?*
2. *What is the role that the indigenous and native organizations play in the negotiations on the oil spills and overall land and environmental issues with oil extractive companies and authorities?*

Structurally, the thesis consists of introduction, a chapter on methodology, three chapters, analysis, conclusion, and lists of references and appendices.

The chapter “Communities, indigenous peoples, territory, land use and land development: linking the constructs” creates a conceptual framework for the present thesis, explains the main notions and their applicability in the current research. The concepts of territory, land, indigenous communities, and meaning of land for them are discussed here. Next chapter “Contemporary situation of indigenous peoples in the Russian Federation” introduces a reader to the topics related to the indigenous and native communities of the North of Russia and covers three dimensions, namely, legal framework that defines indigenous status and consecutive rights, indigenous people in the era of industrial development, and relationship between indigenous and native communities with the extractive industries. The chapter “Introducing the regional cases: the Republic of Komi and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug”, as its title suggests, introduces the regions in question. The first part of the chapter provides brief overview of the region, its population, and environment; the second part is dedicated to introduction of Izhma Komi and the Nenets people and their organizations; and the last one gives ideas about oil production in the Republic of Komi and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, discusses its adverse consequences and influence on indigenous and native settlements. The chapter “Analysis of the responses gained from the indigenous organizations” is dedicated to discussion of information obtained during the interviews with the representatives of the native and public organizations of the Republic of Komi and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug. Finally, the conclusions, answers to the research questions, my comments on the findings are presented in the last chapter.

2. METHODOLOGY

Before immersion of ourselves into the topics marked in introduction, I am going to explain how the research process was conducted, what were the research methods that had been employed, what were the obstacles, and what kind of considerations were needed to be taken into account.

The research started with a review of the articles, academic and non-academic literature, websites, and news media available in the English, Russian, and, in few cases, Komi languages. Majority of the papers dedicated to the particular cases of the Republic of Komi and Nenets Autonomous Okrug were published in Russian or by Russian scholars, although, some of the key papers, e.g. articles by Stammler and Wilson, which formed a theoretical framework for the research, were written by non-Russian scholars in English. As for the articles, introducing common ideas used in the thesis and providing general overview they were published in English. Here it is important to state that literature review was indeed a vital part of overall research due to the amount of data it gave that later was used as a basis for the theoretical part of the thesis and the interview questions. Among all the resources that have been used I would like to outline especially the works of the researchers from the Komi Science Centre, the papers and books written by Anssi Paasi, Stuart Elden, David W. McMillan, David M. Chavis, Florian Stammler, Emma Wilson, and Antalina Ivanova, and the reports prepared by the United Nations, United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and Greenpeace.

Apart from a literature review, several consultations with people engaged in the studied issues were held. Information gained from these consultations is not cited in this thesis either due to a request of a consultant / expert to not directly refer to him / her and keep him/her to be anonymous, or to non-academic nature of such consultations. Nevertheless, all data provided during such consultations later was justified by the interviewed specialists or literature review.

In terms of data collection, the qualitative methods were used. One of the main tasks of my research was conduction of interviews with the representatives of indigenous and native communities involved in relationship with extractive industries, particularly over the issue of oil spills. Within the process of creation of a theoretical base of the research and future thesis, I started to pick the topics and formulate the questions for the subsequent interviews. Due to a limited amount of time and resources, I decided to conduct interviews only with the representatives of the indigenous people that advisedly have active relationship with oil companies. Inclusion of environmental agenda was also considered. Such organizations operating in the Republic of Komi were and are Save the Pechora Committee and interregional

public movement Izvatas. The individual interviews were conducted with Valentina T. Semyashkina, Deputy Director and local communities' coordinator in Silver Taiga Foundation and active member and former Head of a non-governmental organization Save the Pechora Committee, and Nikolai V. Rochev, Chairman of the interregional public movement Izvatas. Both interviews were semi-structured, the main questions had been formulated beforehand, although, some of other topics emerged during the discussions. The interviews were conducted in Russian, recorded, and later decoded and translated to English. While analyzing the interview materials, primarily such type of analysis as thematic analysis, e.g. “a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” has been applied (Braun & Clarke 2006, 79). The common patterns were identified in the responses given by the interviewees and later were compiled and compared, the similarities and differences were acknowledged, which later served as the basis for the conclusions of the conducted research.

Additionally, in summer 2017 three small-scale phone interviews of semi-formal nature were done with Pyotr Khozyainov, Andrey Terentyev, and Leonid Anufriev, all former reindeer herders from Izhemsky rayon of the Komi Republic, in order to clarify several facts addressed in the Master's thesis. During the phone calls the notes were taken, which were later used in writing the thesis.

Here I need to mention that one of the aims of the research was comparison of experiences of indigenous peoples and environmental and public organizations on the issue of oil spills and overall relationship with extractive industries in the Republic of Komi and Nenets Autonomous Okrug. Nevertheless, due to limited possibilities and resources, a fieldtrip to the Okrug was not implemented. Despite this fact, after consultations with Valentina Semyashkina and Nikolai Rochev, a questionnaire composed by the thematic questions, which were discussed during the interviews with them, was sent to the Union of reindeer herders of Nenets Autonomous Okrug. The list of the questions and topics discussed can be found in Appendices (see Appendices No. 5 and 6). Here it is important to mention that the same questions were asked during the interviews with the representatives of Save the Pechora Committee and Izvatas, thus it allowed to track overall connection and logic of the given answers. The questions were written in Russian, as the given answers were also. Later, both sections of the questions and answers were translated to English and in this form used in the thesis.

It is still necessary to mention that the Union is not the only, and possibly not even the main organization that is engaged in indigenous peoples' issues in Nenets Autonomous Okrug. In the Okrug such an organization is Yasavey. The same questionnaire that had been sent to the Union of reindeer herders was also sent to Yasavey. However, the representatives of the organization

have never replied back despite the several phone calls that were made by the author and several emails sent to the various departments of the organization. It is still important to mention that the articles written by Stammeler and Tuisku has a lot of references to the case of the Nenets people, and sometimes – to Yasavey, thus using the secondary data it is still possible to recreate some image of the overall situation in the region.

Despite the fact that in these circumstances, due to limited amount of data from Nenets Autonomous Okrug, the Master's thesis's focus has been switched primarily to the case of the Komi Republic and particularly to the Izhma Komi's settlements, information provided by the Union and data found from the previous researches on this topic is presented in the analysis.

During the various stages of data collection, as well as during the phase of interviews and consultations, the ethical principles of research conduction were borne in mind and employed.

As it was already mentioned one of the consultants asked not to be named and referred to in the thesis. In this instance, a dialogue with this expert was of anonymous private nature with no audio recording. These conditions were discussed beforehand, thus, no violations or offences were done.

In terms of interviews' conduction, no question of anonymity arose, since in the beginning of each interview the specialists were asked the following questions: 1) whether or not they allow to use information, which they will provide, in the present thesis, 2) whether or not they allow to include their real names and occupations, 3) whether or not they allow to refer to them directly in the thesis, and 4) whether or not they allow to be reached and contacted after the interviews in case of necessity to clarify given information¹. To all aforementioned questions both experts gave positive answers. During exact conduction of the interviews no ethical problems were faced, mostly due to the “public” and open nature of the questions asked and themes discussed.

As for data collection, the principle of antiplagiarism has been followed consistently. All literature and other sources and data from the previous researches used in the thesis were accurately referred to. The full list of references can be found in the end of the thesis.

In terms of limitations of the research, it is important to mention since primarily only two groups of people were analyzed, the findings are mainly applicable only to these two groups.

¹ Here clarification is needed: this particular question was asked in the end of each interviews, not in the beginning as three others.

Nevertheless, as will be discussed in the thesis later, main issues tend to stay topical also for the other indigenous groups in Russia, and some similarities may thus be traced.

In the end of the chapter, it is vital to state that the author of the thesis is not affiliated personally or monetarily with any of the public, indigenous and native organizations discussed in the thesis, as well as, extractive companies. No financial support has been offered to conduct the research from any of the parties, thus, I assume it is possible to state that research keeps to be as unbiased as possible. Nevertheless, in order to stay as clear and honest as possible it is still necessary to mention that the author is originated from the one of the region discussed, namely the Republic of Komi, and even more has close family ties with the Izhma Komi community. However, while conducting the research I kept distancing myself from looking at the issues from the perspective of a person who to some extent is personally affected by the discussed problems, and rather to switch to an observer's point of view.

3. COMMUNITIES, INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, TERRITORY, LAND USE AND LAND DEVELOPMENT: LINKING THE CONSTRUCTS

The role of the concepts in social sciences studies is undoubtedly enormous. Defining the concepts used in the thesis, I set a direction for further research, as well as provide a reader with my perspective towards the ideas discussed. In majority of cases, while explaining the notions I refer to the previous works done in the particular fields, although, in some of the cases adjustment of the terms to the particular needs of this thesis is implemented.

“Community” is one of these concepts that are used widely in numerous spheres, but frequently without any proper explanation. Taking a concept by default, we may miss important features inherited in it in certain scientific fields where it is being employed. Thus, in order to be consistent in further discussion, I reckon that defining community in a way this thesis uses this notion is vital.

The challenges of defining a community are rooted in its twofold nature: on the one hand, a community is consisted of social relations and interaction, special norms and values, which create and differentiate every particular community; on the other, existence of certain community is impossible without attachment to the specific geographical area or place. In their “Sense of Community” McMillan and Chavis (1986, 8) refer to the work of Joseph Gusfield

(1975), who distinguished these two expressions of community, but, although, did not exclude their mutual interrelation. Developing the definition of community McMillan and Chavis came to creation of the theory of a sense of community, stating that it can be applied both to geographically or territorially defined communities, as well as to their relational counterparts (McMillan and Chavis 1986, 8). They conclude that such elements as membership (a sense of belonging), influence (a sense of mattering), reinforcement (a sense of fulfillment), and shared emotional connection (a sense of shared experiences) construct a sense of community, which is finally defined as “a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together” (ibid., 9).

In terms of this thesis, community is primarily understood as a special form of association and interaction of people, residing on a particular territory and connected by distinctive shared values, memories, and experiences. The accent on territorial element is important in this particular case, though, as aforementioned it is not a determinative of all types of the communities.

Attachment to a specific place, which can be defined not only in pure geographical terms as a locality, but rather from the perspective that already Paasi has employed (1996, 206-211)², i.e. through various individual experiences and social practices linked to and associated with this locality, leads us to the next concept of local communities. The debate of defining local is longstanding in various social studies, particularly in sociology of place and human geography. Continuation of old and emerge of new development processes on the dramatically different levels of societal construction supplement this discussion. On the one hand, currently, due to a variety of all interconnections, interdependencies, and mutual influence between local and global, as the instances of these levels, the borders between them have become much more permeable and, therefore, undoubtedly affected their very definitions (see: Mazlich 2005). On the other, the notions of place and belonging to this particular place are not limited by exclusively geographical boundaries, but widely affected by other subjective human factors, for instance, emotions (den Besten 2010, 183-184). Thus, although, in regard to this thesis, local means primarily territorial attachment to a settlement, this attachment would be impossible

² Here I would like to use a quotation from Paul Tournier's book "L'homme et son lieu" that has been also referred to in Anssi Paasi's book "Territories, Boundaries and Consciousness. The Changing Geographies of the Finnish-Russian Border": "A human being identifies himself with places, where he has lived, has been happy and suffered. He is bound with matter, things and ground. Our places are our relation to the world" (Tournier 1971, 13).

without considering other factors that determine belonging, like already mentioned shared values and shared memories, or what is new, ethnicity and spoken language.

Interestingly that in many cases, searching for a definition or explanation of the idea of local communities, we may notice that a lot of references are directed to the subject of rural areas and rural communities. To a certain degree, such a juxtaposition of two terms is also true for the present thesis, but does not necessarily make two concepts to be synonymous. While local is primarily regarded as a special state of belonging, rural is mainly (but not exclusively, see: Woods 2009, 850-851) viewed as a certain state of community and settlement's development defined by the specific functional and economic structure. In some of the cases, these two characteristics may cross each other, but as it is already pointed out, that does not make this trend to be uniform in many other situations.

A link to ethnicity or belonging to a specific ethnic group has been recognized as one of the possible features of the local communities. From this perspective, the debates are dedicated to the homo- and heterogeneous communities, namely to influence of ethnicity of the local residents on the local societal well-being. In their article Gibbons and Yang (2016, 532) refer to the previous research, which surmised that in ethnically diverse communities the level of community cohesion is much lower than in the communities with homogenous ethnical population. Nevertheless, later they imply that ethnical (and racial) diversity cannot be the only, and possibly not the most significant, obstacle of lack of cohesion in multi-ethnic settlements (ibid., 551). Rather, they propose, it is economic segregation, which, although, still can be and is mainly triggered by the ethnic differences, that acts as the determining factor.

Other object that attracts special interest in discussion of the ethnic communities is indigenous peoples. So far, there are tens of local and national concepts characterizing them, but hardly any single global formalized definition of indigenous peoples (or native, or aboriginal peoples) can be found. Nevertheless, despite the obvious differences among those peoples, several common features are listed further. According to the United Nations, they define "indigenous" by referring to the following characteristics:

- “1. Self-identification as indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member.
2. Historical continuity with pre-colonial and / or pre-settler societies.
3. Strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources.
4. Distinct social, economic or political systems.
5. Distinct language, culture and beliefs.
6. Form non-dominant groups of society.
7. Resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities” (United Nations 2006).

Concerning this thesis, the third aspect, namely, indigenous peoples' connection to territories is of utmost importance.

According to Paasi (1996, 3), territories and territorial units are not only the physical geographical units, but also always are the products of various institutional practices, endowed with special socio-cultural meaning. This assumption leads to the statement that territories are temporary and not eternal constructs. While temporality of the territories is definitely a relative concept, it, nevertheless, does not eliminate a fact that there is hardly any territory in the world that did not overcome any kind of changes. The same may be applicable to the definition of a territory; a sense imported in it has varied not only in the specific periods, but as well, in the particular scientific theories. Brief, but substantial explanation of evolution and critiques of the concept is presented in the articles written by Stuart Elden (2010 and 2013).

In his "Land, terrain, territory" Elden (2010) hypothesizes that a term of "territory" has been neglected by the scholars, while more attention has been paid to a concept of "territoriality" that is, as Robert D. Sack defines it, "the attempt to affect, influence, or control actions, interactions, or access by asserting and attempting to enforce control over a specific geographic area" (1983, 55). Elden continues with his analysis and concludes that the attempts to define territory through territoriality are far more usual in social studies than primarily accentuating the basic concept of territory.

Switching to the exact analysis of the concept, Elden points out that defining territory primarily and exclusively as bounded space (i.e. a specific geographic area) is no longer applicable (2010, 799). Therefore, the links to other constructs and phenomena are needed. And here the Foucault's famous statement on territory that proposes that "territory is no doubt a geographical notion, but it is first of all a juridico-political one: the area controlled by a certain kind of power" comes to the stage (Elden 2013, 7). It is worth to be mentioned that this attachment to power is commonly and widely used in contemporary attempts to define territory.

Although, Elden does not propose a solid and sound definition of territory in his articles, he still brings invaluable insights to the debate and highlights the necessity to study territory as "a topic in itself" (2010, 811). The concept of territory used in the thesis tends to follow the Foucault definition, combining geographical sense of territory (territory as a specific bounded space) with a manifestation of power (territory as "political technology" (ibid., 811-812)).

We may say that the political-economic constituent of territory is land. In other words, land may be referred to territory as one of the forms of property. In classical economics, land, as a property, is primarily seen as one of the three primary factors of production, other two include

capital and labor. The political and legal dimensions of land are constituted by the right to own land. According to Elden (ibid., 806), “possession of land is the determinant of power, and conflict over land a key indicator of power struggles”. The whole range of land tenure rights are among others formed by the right to access land, the right to obtain and use the products of that land, the right to manage and control issues over land, and the right “to determine the access rights and transferal of them” (McCall 2016, 63). On the one hand, possession of land simultaneously means possession of the resources that this land has, which undoubtedly makes a question of land possession to be topical on the various levels, from a household to a state one. On the other, security of the land possession rights is the key element of “confidence in territory” (ibid.).

The question of whose is the land is vital indeed. There are several perspectives of this issue, including legal and historical. The second one is regarded as more or less connected with longstanding residence on a particular territory and attachment to this territory. Here we can say that while talking about a spiritual meaning of territory and land for the indigenous and native peoples, this type of tenure is usually employed.

As it has been already mentioned in description of the elements of the indigenous communities, connection to territory and land is a cornerstone of a way of life and well-being of such communities. As the authors of the Kimberley Declaration of the International Indigenous Peoples Summit on Sustainable Development elegantly worded it:

“As peoples, we reaffirm our rights to self-determination and to own, control and manage our ancestral lands and territories, waters and other resources. Our lands and territories are at the core of our existence – we are the land and the land is us; we have a distinct spiritual and material relationship with our lands and territories and they are inextricably linked to our survival and to the preservation and further development of our knowledge systems and cultures, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem management” (The Kimberley Declaration 2002).

The ways, in which such interconnection is established, are enormous in indigenous communities all around the globe. Firstly, the natural resources (water, fauna, flora, etc.) that land possesses are the base of people’s livelihoods and everyday nutrition. Secondly, the spiritual meaning of the land is incorporated in indigenous peoples’ outlooks:

“in Nepal, we have groups that only can achieve their spiritual place on the planet by going to a certain location” (United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 2007),

“in white society, a person’s home is a structure made of bricks or timber, but to our people our home was the land that we hunted and gathered on and held ceremony and gatherings”³.

Thirdly, combination of indigenous communities’ understanding and knowledge of nature and environment they live in, their role in environmental-human relationship, and their practices directed towards environment and nature shape traditional ecological knowledge (see more: National Geographic 2012).

To take all of these factors into account, it becomes clear that, firstly, land tenure rights and control over the territory are indeed invaluable for indigenous peoples, and, secondly, the ecological condition and health of their land and their environment are of crucial importance for them.

4. CONTEMPORARY SITUATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

4.1 The legal dimension

The Russian legal framework does not employ a concept of “indigenous peoples” in a sense it is used in the United Nations Declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. Instead, it proposes such nomination as “indigenous small-numbered people”⁴. In order to be included in the list of these peoples, it is required to fit four preconditions, namely “1) be a distinct ethnic group, and self-identify as such; 2) be “small”, with a population not exceeding 50 thousand, 3) be indigenous to and reside within a certain geographic realm; 4) maintain a “traditional” way of life (IWGIA Report 18: Indigenous peoples in the Russian Federation 2014, 9). The third criterion – to be small and not exceed 50 thousand people – is often regarded as the most biased, since it sets an artificial limit for peoples to be recognized as indigenous in Russia. Particularly due to this limit, which is imposed by the law “On indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East of the Russian Federation” only less than 50 ethnic groups residing in Russia are recognized as indigenous small-numbered peoples⁵ (Federal law “On the

³ Creative Spirits: Meaning of land to Aboriginal people. Available on: <https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/land/meaning-of-land-to-aboriginal-people> [Accessed 14.11.2016].

⁴ Another possible term is “numerically small indigenous peoples”; in Russian: “*коренные малочисленные народы*”.

⁵ NB! Throughout the thesis while discussing indigenous peoples of Russia I refer solely and exclusively to the indigenous peoples of North, Siberia, and Far East of the Russian Federation.

guarantees of the rights of indigenous small-numbered peoples of the Russian Federation” 2016).

The difference between generic term “indigenous peoples” and legal concept of “indigenous small-numbered peoples” leads to dramatically different conditions of peoples’ legal imaging and protection. Only those peoples, who are included in the list of indigenous small-numbered peoples, are entitled to use the possibilities that the laws “On the guarantees of the rights of indigenous small-numbered peoples of the Russian Federation” (Federal Law No. 82 from 30.04.1999) and “On the territories of traditional natural resource use of indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East of the Russian Federation” offer (Federal Law No. 49 from 07.05.2001) (Federal law “On the guarantees of the rights of indigenous small-numbered peoples of the Russian Federation” 2016; Federal law “On the territories of traditional natural resource use of the indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East of the Russian Federation” 2016). Some of the exclusive rights of the indigenous small-numbered people include: to gratuitously use lands and natural resources in the territories of their traditional residence and traditional activities, to receive material and financial support from the authorities of different levels for socio-economic and cultural development, to receive compensations for losses caused by damage of the territories of traditional residence of indigenous small-numbered people by the economic activities of organizations and individuals, to substitute military service with an alternative civilian service, to preserve and develop native languages, to create different types of associations and organizations for providing financial support to indigenous people, etc.

Some of the major benefits granted to indigenous small-numbered peoples are mainly of monetary nature, which also means that peoples who are recognized as indigenous small-numbered receive different privileges and social bonuses, while other native peoples do not. This artificial separation of indigenous peoples to small-numbered and not granted with such status, among many other consequences, causes huge economic, political, and social segregation of those peoples, who are not included in the official list, but who, nevertheless, claim the respective status.

In order not to overload the thesis with the numerous repetitions, in the chapters particularly dedicated to the Komi Republic and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug while referring to indigenous peoples included in the list of indigenous small-numbered peoples, I employ the term “indigenous peoples”, and while discussing other peoples who share the similar characteristics but are not included in the official list (in particular, Izhma Komi), I use the “native peoples” denomination. Such division helps to demarcate legal status of these peoples

and trace the differences in their rights and access to social and other benefits. Otherwise, it should be remembered that such approach does not pretend to be employed in other academic and non-academic works since it is used in this particular thesis only for the needs explained above.

According to the law “On the territories of traditional natural resource use of indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East of the Russian Federation”, by the corresponding territories the specifically protected areas, established for traditional nature and natural resource use and conduction of the traditional way of life of indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East of the Russian Federation, are meant (Federal law “On the territories of traditional natural resource use of the indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East of the Russian Federation” 2016). The law also states that: 1) there are federal, regional, and local territories of traditional nature resource use, 2) land on these territories may be used in accordance with a governmental or municipal consent, 3) such land may be withdrawn in accordance with the state or municipal needs, 4) indigenous peoples residing on these territories can gratuitously use mineral resources found on these territories, and 5) use of nature resources on these territories by the citizens and legal entities for business purposes is permitted only if a specified activity does not violate the legal regime of such territories (ibid.). On these territories people may not only be engaged in the traditional nature resource use and traditional activities, but what is equally important to settle there. Thus, we may say that although the territories of indigenous peoples’ residence enlisted as the territories of traditional natural resources use are still legally owned by the state (or a region), but, certainly, the land rights, which these peoples possess over these territories, provide them sufficient legal tools.

4.2. Indigenous peoples and industrial development

While continuing describing indigenous peoples, it is important to mention that despite seemingly undeveloped nature of the indigenous communities, in majority of the cases their residents do not oppose economic development of their settlements (Stammler and Wilson 2006, 19). They do understand what kind of benefits such development may bring, but what they definitely do oppose are the possible repercussions of economic and particularly industrial development, namely environmental harm and disposition of their land rights or claims for such rights. According to the United Nations (United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 2007), there is a clear link between losses of the lands and indigenous lands rights and “marginalization, discrimination and underdevelopment” of indigenous communities.

Without any doubt, previous and on-going stages of industrial and economic development, as well as diverse political processes passing in the Soviet Union and subsequently in the Russian Federation, have influenced almost all spheres of traditional life of indigenous communities and native peoples as well.

Historically, the traditional activities of majority of the Northern indigenous and native peoples were reindeer herding, sea-hunting (and whaling, in particular), fishing, hunting, and mushrooms, berries, and herbs gathering. Although, there are also many other activities that are traditional to the specific groups, for instance, rock excavation and stone carving are the traditional activities of the Vepsians (RAIPON 2013, 8). Nowadays, reindeer-herding and sea-hunting are regarded as the most promising economic activities among the aforementioned ones, also due to the structural changes happened during the Soviet times: e.g. reindeer herding was developed as a profitable agricultural industry, while family communities that were engaged in reindeer herding practices were transformed in production teams or brigades (AMAP Report 2004, 21). Hunting and fishing, influenced by adaptation of new techniques and tools and consequently loss of traditional methods, are currently regarded almost exclusively in terms of a source of food in local communities, but not as the stable profitable occupations as they used to be. The same, in general, applies to the gathering activities.

Analyzing the affects that economic and industrial development brought to the indigenous and native communities we may witness such situation that majority of them are regarded as quite negative, especially in connection to traditional lifestyle and traditional activities of indigenous and native peoples, and environment. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that in this regard and especially when talking about positive consequences we face emergence of an obstacle of identifying what is positive in the indigenous and native communities' perspective and in the perspective of outsiders. Here are some examples. From one point of view, increasing openness of local communities to outside world as a consequence of economic development resulted in influx of new goods, from the other hand, some of these goods led to marginalization of the communities or dramatic alterations, particularly, an influx of alcohol resulted in mass alcohol consumption among the local population, delivery of sugar and preservatives led to the changes in diet, etc. Possibly, a few positive consequences that are more or less undisputable are increasing literacy and professional education among the locals and establishment of schools and health centers (ibid., 24).

In relation to industrial development in particular, problematic issues concerning environmental degradation arise. The most outstanding instance of it is operation of natural resource extractive and mining companies. Absolute majority of indigenous and native have claims for lands they

reside on and are strongly attached to local nature and environment. These lands are usually resource-rich, a fact of which frequently leads to the clashes between the extractive companies that would like to operate or already have been operating in a particular area and indigenous communities that reside on that land for centuries (United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 2009; Warden-Fernandez 2001, 4). From the perspective of the industries these lands are frequently regarded as “frontier lands” or “terra nullius, free and waiting to be explored, often also connected with the idea that it is void of meaning before explorers arrive there” (Stammler & Ivanova 2016b).

Bearing this data in mind, it is interesting to outline the fact noticed by Stammler and Ivanova in their article on the strategies of human-resource relations in the northern regions of Russia. As they write, “indigenous and local people’s rights to be consulted start after the decision to extract and the issuing of the license [for operation on oil fields]. It is therefore permitted to do exploratory activity without consulting with the local population” (Stammler & Ivanova 2016a, 63). The concerns of indigenous peoples are indeed not a priority for the respective agencies issuing such licenses in the country that is highly dependent on the revenues from natural resources exploration (Stammler & Ivanova 2016b, 1224). The similar is addressed by Stammler and Peskov in the article “Building a “culture of dialogue” among stakeholders in north-west Russian oil extraction”, where they mention that “unlike in northern regions outside Russia, local and indigenous people have virtually no influence over whether or not land is destined to be exploited for hydrocarbon development” (Stammler & Peskov 2008, 835).

It is clear that operation of extractive and mining companies is hardly possible without causing any harm to environment. On the other hand, it should be noted that in regard to the northern and far northern regions this environment is especially fragile and vulnerable.

In case of Russia’s Far North, the environmental degradation, which was caused by mining and extractive companies, has led to the increasing levels of mortality and morbidity of indigenous peoples, shortages of pastures for reindeer, contamination of the natural food resources, and chemical pollution, which affects not only a particular settlement, but spreads beyond its borders (ibid., 25-26). According to Fryer and Lehtinen (2013, 23), in extreme cases the environmental changes and risks may lead to migration of indigenous peoples. Nevertheless, more frequently the consequences of these hazards do not lead to the radical changes of the domiciles, but rather affect the daily routine of the communities.

The main actors pursuing distinctive interest in extracting activities on lands of indigenous and native communities’ residence are authorities (state, regional, and municipal), businesses

(extractive companies themselves), and indigenous peoples. Here the environmental, public, and indigenous peoples' organizations should not be forgotten as well.

In the end of this paragraph it is essential to mention that legal documents and agreements, as well as whole legal framework plays definitely important and even crucial role. Although it is not our task to analyze these agreements, the legal practitioners and scholars will undoubtedly do it better, but still it is possible to note that according to legislation of the countries where indigenous peoples reside, for example, Canada, the United States of America, Australia, New Zealand, the Russian Federation, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, etc., allows indigenous communities to sign participation and other forms of agreements with extractive companies (United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 2009). Whether these agreements are successful and do they really allow the indigenous communities to exercise their power is an entirely different matter. One way or another, in some countries such agreements are limited to participation of the indigenous peoples only on preparatory stage of the extractive or mining activities, in others – they have wider and stronger possibilities to influence the decisions made by the extractive companies (see more: Warden-Fernandez 2001).

4.3. Indigenous peoples and extractive industries

According to Stammler and Ivanova (2016a, 70-71), there are several types of relationship between resources using companies and local and indigenous communities bonded by the same lands. These are confrontation, coexistence, and co-ignorance. Confrontation may be of violent, as well as non-violent nature and occur between locals, who “try to fight for a niche in which they practice their partnership logic in resource use”, and “dominant actors with a utilitarian management approach”. The law of the strongest usually defines the patterns of such relationship. Confrontation is indeed typical for the case of the Usinskiy rayon of the Komi Republic, where oil companies, local and indigenous communities are lacking a constructive dialogue (Wilson 2016, 77). Generally, confrontation that often leads to public protests is usually triggered by substantial mutual misunderstandings between the industry and local communities (Stammler & Wilson 2006, 9). Co-existence relates to the co-operation where interests of both sides are actively involved and considered. A prominent example of this type of relationship is the Nenets reindeer herders from the European part of Russia (Stammler & Ivanova 2016a, 66-67). Such practice established in the region of their habitat is dated back already to the Soviet era and rooted in recognition of “the right of existence of the other”, work for a common good and economic profit, an ability of the indigenous people and indigenous

organization “to learn the language of the dominant actors”⁶, as well as readiness to compromise, which applies to the both parties involved (ibid.). The personal contacts between representatives of indigenous peoples and oil companies, as well as local authorities, in this type of relationship play immensely important role, which nevertheless may be weakened by the continuous rotation of people in power in industry and administration (Stammler & Peskov 2008, 842). The last type, namely co-ignorance, is about mutual avoidance and absence of cooperation / confrontation in regard to the land, environmental, and social issues.

There are many links that connect indigenous and native communities and extractive industry in the Russian Federation. Some of them include social agreements with municipalities, within which framework extractive companies monetarily support local population and settlements, including indigenous and native ones. These agreements relate, in a way, to a manifestation of the given “social license to operate”, which is, according to Wilson (2016, 74), “is a metaphorical term used to conceptualize the notion that, alongside legal permits and licenses, there is the often less tangible ‘social acceptance’ without which a company may face ‘non-technical’ risks such as community conflict and workforce protests” and which is existing in indeed diverse forms (from less to more formal and formalized). From this perspective, it is as well essential to mention that such element of corporate social responsibility of the big industries operating in the regions and districts has played a vital role since the years of the Soviet Union. And despite the fact that currently the companies are not supposed to be “total social institutions”, as it’s worded by Stammler and Wilson (2006, 17), as they used to be, still local communities, as well as local authorities, expect the industries to provide them support of various kinds.

The question “Do the indigenous organizations sign their own agreements with extractive companies?” is tricky and to some extent quite delicate. From one point of view, for these organizations, which especially accentuate environmental agenda in their strategies, such agreements might be interpreted at least as biased; from the other, there is no need to explain how much money are concentrated in extractive industry that also can be and should be used for the needs of indigenous and native peoples. Bearing this in mind, it is not surprising that indigenous organizations try not to display their affiliations with extractive industry, which some of them (especially those that function on regional level) undoubtedly have. In all other cases, occasional support by extractive companies of the particular projects implemented by

⁶ At the same time, as Stammler and Wilson point this out (2006, 30), in order to ensure long-term trustful relationship, it is equally important that the representatives of and authorities from the industries are being capable to find the suitable approaches to negotiate with indigenous peoples, as well as to know their claims and to understand their stances.

indigenous organizations (particularly, associated with traditional culture, sports, education, etc.) is of common occurrence.

The environmental issues, in this regard, indeed occupy an outstanding position. As it was already mentioned there is a clear evidence of the adverse effects of natural resource extractive companies' operation on indigenous and native peoples' communities and surrounding environment. Keeping in mind extreme importance of environment and land for the indigenous and native peoples, it becomes understandable why people, who are usually regarded as peaceful and to some extent not socially minded, start to contend for their territories and rights.

The conflicts between the companies that are engaged in natural resources use and extraction and indigenous and native population (and indigenous and native organizations) are quite common in the natural resources rich regions of Russia. The differences in their scale and intensity are also evident. According to Davydov et al. (2006, 360) the conflicts, which happen in the northern regions, and particularly in the regions of Russian Arctic, have been triggered by the interference of industrial development in the areas of interests of the indigenous and native peoples and their way of life. The examples can be found in such regions of Russia as Nenets Autonomous Okrug (see: Davydov et al. 2006), Khanty-Mansi and Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrugs (see: Dallmann et al. 2011).

The reasons, intensity, scale, and outcomes of such conflicts may vary, but on general level, environmental hazards, economic grounds, and social factors play a vital role in emergence and development of such conflicts. The instances of the conflicts of tough nature are quite common; nevertheless, in spite of active stance occupied by indigenous and native peoples, majority of the conflicts are taking more or less peaceful course in that terms that no threat is imposed to people's lives and property. Nevertheless, in some cases the conflicts may developed in more extreme ways. One of the most prominent examples here is a situation happened in Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug in 2015, when Sergei Kechimov, a Khanty shaman, got accused of uttering death threats to a worker of Surgutneftegas oil company. According to Kechimov, he shot to death the oilmen's dog because of the threats it imposed to his reindeer herd, later some men came and forced him to sign a document written in Russian, which Kechimov had a little knowledge of, which later was recognized as confession that Kechimov had threatened to kill the workers of the oil company (for more information see: Kommersant.ru 2015; Radio Svoboda 2015; 7x7 2015). Kechimov was convicted and sentenced to manual labor, but was granted amnesty in honor of the 70th anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War. What makes this story to be especially important is the place where it happened, namely, near the lake Ilmor, a Khanty sacral place of worship, which has turned in an oilfield development area.

Not all indigenous and native organizations have the same active role in debates with extractive organizations. The biggest part of them are engaged primarily in preservation of traditional culture, language, and folklore, and have no environmental and ecological perspective in their agenda. Another issue is a growing number of such organizations, which in fact just duplicate themselves, at the same time not being strong and powerful enough to solve the existing problems (RAIPON 2013, 48):

A: Well, Saami, Saami organizations ... well, Saami, God knows, [...] how many organizations, and they fight among themselves, almost 5 or 6 Saami organizations. (Nikolai Rochev, author's interview).

This fact, namely inefficiency of some indigenous organizations, is topical not only in perspective of the environmental problems, but it is rather actual at the general level, and especially while establishing dialogue and connections with regional and federal authorities. There are various indigenous organizations in Russia, and its number is not limited to the number of indigenous and native ethnic groups they represent, but, as has been already briefly mentioned, rather exceeds it. There are big differences in institutional structure of these organizations, their agenda and strategies, as well as in possibilities to exert influence on decisions made by local, regional, and federal authorities. The representatives of indigenous peoples of North, Siberia, and Far East of Russia are united within the framework of the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East (RAIPON), which has a wide range of tools to cooperate with federal authorities and promote indigenous peoples' rights. Interestingly that its Coordination Council is comprised from the representatives of not solely indigenous small-numbered peoples, but it also includes a group that does not have this status, namely Izhma Komi (RAIPON 2016).

5. INTRODUCING THE REGIONAL CASES: THE REPUBLIC OF KOMI AND THE NENETS AUTONOMOUS OKRUG

The chapter provides an introduction into the regions in question, their geographies, social and economic structure, ethnic groups residing there, particularly two ethnic minority groups, namely the Izhma Komi and the Nenets, and their organizations, as well as presents the current situation with oil extraction there.

5.1. The Komi Republic and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug: background description of the regions

5.1.1. The Republic of Komi

The Republic of Komi (or the Komi Republic, or Komi) covers an area of 416.8 thousand sq.km that can be compared with the area of Paraguay (406.7 thousand sq. km), 60th largest country in the world (The World Factbook 2016). In terms of geographical location, the Republic lays in the north-eastern part of the European part of Russia (see Appendix No.1). Komi shares its borders with seven regions, namely, Perm Krai, Kirov oblast, Arkhangelsk oblast, Nenets Autonomous Okrug (AO), Yamalo-Nenets AO, Khanty-Mansi AO, and Sverdlovsk oblast. Despite the fact that all regions are connected via bilateral agreements on co-operation, the Republic's most evident and fruitful connections have been established with Kirov oblast and Nenets Autonomous Okrug. The last is especially topical in the context of construction of the Syktykar – Naryan-Mar highway and natural resources extraction in Timan-Pechora Basin Province (Official web portal of the Komi Republic 2016b).

Administratively, Komi is divided into 12 “*rayony*”⁷ (Izhemsky, Knyazhpogostsky, Koigorodsky, Kortkerossky, Priluzsky, Syktyvdinsky, Sysol'sky, Troitsko-Pechorsky, Udorsky, Ust'-Kulomsky, Ust'-Tsilemsky, and Ust'-Vymsky) and 10 cities (Syktyvkar, Inta, Pechora, Sosnogorsk, Usinsk, Ukhta, Vorkuta, and Vuktyl) with Syktyvkar being the capital (Official web portal of the Komi Republic A; The Constitution of the Republic of Komi 2017). There is a clear division between rural and urban areas in Komi: majority of the rayony still experiences the development disparities in terms of infrastructure, economic development, and overall quality of life, while the cities, which, in many instances, are hugely supported by the various industries and companies located there, and therefore may offer far better opportunities to attract more people to reside and work there.

Favorable location predictably influences the composition of the region's economy and industry. The top sectors of the Republic's economy are oil, gas and coal production, mineral exploration, energy complex and timber and pulp and paper industry. In terms of the fuel and energy complex, it mainly includes oil extraction, oil refining, gas and coal industry and electric-power industry (Permanent Representation of the Republic of Komi to the President of the Russian Federation 2016). The features and various aspects of the oil industry in Komi

⁷ “Districts”, Russian: “*районы*”; a singular form: “*район*”, “*rayon*”. The transliterated Russian terms are used in the thesis.

Republic are discussed in one of the following chapters. In this regard, for now we are going to skip vast description of it.

Coal production is concentrated in the Pechora coal basin and operated in such cities as Vorkuta and Inta. Mineral exploration includes production of bauxite (Komi has more than 27 % of all-Russia bauxite resources), titanite ore (approximately 50% of all-Russia resources), manganese ore, rock salt, etc. (Kalinin 2010, 12-13).

Timber industry includes several companies, the largest of which is Mondi Syktyvkar, self-proclaimed as “one of the leaders in the Russian pulp and paper industry and the largest domestic paper producer” (Mondi Group 2016; Official web portal of the Komi Republic B).

In term of administrative and territorial status, the Komi Republic is one of 85 (according to the Constitution of Russia) federal subjects of the Russian Federation (The Constitution of the Russian Federation 2017). In past times Komi had different administrative statuses, and, consequently, different denominations (1921-1936 – Komi Autonomous Okrug, 1936-1991 – Komi Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, 1991-1993 – Komi Soviet Socialist Republic), nevertheless, in order to stay clear and precise the current denomination “the Komi Republic” (or “the Republic of Komi”) is going to be used when referring to the region.

In administrative and political terms, Komi has a special status of a republic, shared with other 21 subjects of the federation⁸, and which is reflected in its denomination. The main features of the republics that make them to differ from the other territorial administrative units of Russia are represented by the facts that the republics are, firstly, de jure autonomous, i.e. have the status of a state (according to the Art. 5 of the Constitution of Russia), and secondly, they have their own constitutions, which at the same time should not contradict the Constitution of Russia (The Constitution of the Russian Federation 2017).

Nominally, one of the other features of the republics is presence of a certain ethnic group that may be an ethnic minority group at the same time. In majority of the republics, especially in those that are located in the Northern Caucasian region, there are more than one ethnic group cohabitating together. In some of the republics, the local ethnic groups (or group) constitute the higher share of population than the Russians (for example, in the aforementioned Northern Caucasian republics). However, it is not applicable to the republics where a local ethnic group belongs to the Finno-Ugric peoples, i.e. the Republic of Karelia, the Republic of Komi, Mari

⁸ According to the Constitution of the Russian Federation (2017), Crimea has a status of a republic as well, but it is not recognized as such by the international community.

El, and Mordovia. In terms of the Republic of Komi, according to the Census 2010, the Russians constitute the majority of population (65 %), while Komi take a 24 % share.

Another feature of the republics is the right to institute their own state languages. The only republic in Russia that does not have its own state language (besides the Russian language) is the Republic of Karelia. The reason for it lies in the Karelian language alphabet: it uses letters from the Latin script, while Russian legislation allows to institute as the state languages only that languages, which use the Cyrillic writing system (according to the Art. 3 of the Federal law “On the languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation”) (Federal law “On the languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation” 2016). The state (or official) languages of the Republic Komi are Russian and Komi as declared by the Art. 67 of the Constitution of the Republic of Komi. The equal usage of the Russian and Komi languages is as well guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Komi (The Constitution of the Republic of Komi 2017).

Population of the Komi Republic, which has been constantly decreasing since 1989, currently amounts to less than 900 thousand people, while approximately a third resides in the capital of the region, Syktyvkar (Federal State Statistics Service 2015; Territorial Authority of the Federal State Statistics Service in the Komi Republic 2016; Boldyrev 1990, 10).

Before 1980s, Komi, as many of other northern regions in Russia, was a receiving region, meaning that people moving to the region outnumbered people who wanted to leave it (Popova 2010, 113). The causes to move to Komi and types of migration were diverse in different periods: forced migration connected with growth of correctional labour camps and later GULAG labour camps and population transfer in the Soviet Union (in 1920-1950s) was followed by labour migration due to development of industry and mining operations and mineral exploration (mainly in 1960-1980s). It is essential to outline that changes happened during 1930-1950s, e.g. displacement of people from other regions to the Republic, have extremely influenced the modern population composition of the Republic of Komi. Some of the reflections of such changes include a huge long-term decline of local Komi population (from 92,25 % in 1926 to 24 % in 2010), subsequent increase of Russian population, and enhancement of ethnic diversification (All-Union Census 1926).

The main reasons for the on-going decline of population are internal migration and negative natural increase rate (Bodnar & Zainullin 2012, 35; Fauzer 2010, 108). The causes for the negative natural increase rate are low natality and high mortality rates (Bodnar & Zainullin 2012, 35). The reasons for internal migration, e.g. migration within Russia, include better job and studies opportunities outside the Republic, harsh climate conditions, family reunification, and repatriation (Ministry of nationalities policy of the Republic of Komi 2015, 7).

According to the official portal of the Republic of Komi, approximately 130 different nationalities and ethnic groups reside in Komi. The exact number of the representatives of the certain nationalities differs a lot: from less than 10 persons (for instance, the Besermyans, Koryaks, Mansi, Evenks, and others) to more than 1 thousand. The Russians, Komi, Ukrainians, Tatars, Belarussians, Chuvash, Germans, and Azerbaijanis constitute the biggest national groups in the Komi Republic (Census 2010).

While speaking about the Komi people, the titular minority of the region, it is important to understand that besides the existing division into the Komi-Zyrians (who constitute the second largest ethnic group and one of two title nationalities in the Republic of Komi) and the Komi-Permyaks (utmost settled in Perm Krai, specifically in Komi-Permyak Okrug)⁹, these groups are additionally divided into several smaller subgroups. It is interesting to note that in everyday life in the Republic of Komi the term “Zyrians” is rarely used, being substituted by the generic term “Komi”. Thus, while referring to the Komi people in this thesis, by it generally I mean Komi people residing in the Republic of Komi.

In terms of Komi-Zyrians (self-designated as “Komi Voityr”¹⁰), it is possible to identify the following subgroups¹¹: Udorasayas (*Удорасаяс*, Udora Komi), Vylysezhvayas (*Вылысэжвасаяс*, Upper Vychegda Komi), Ezhvatas (*Эжватас*, Lower Vychega Komi), Emvatas (*Емватас*, Vym’ Komi), Izvatas (*Изьватас*, Izhma Komi), Pechorasa (*Печораса*, Pechora Komi), Syktylsayas (*Сыктылсаяс*, Sysola Komi), Luzsayas (*Лузасаяс*, Luza Komi) (The ethnographic groups of the Komi-Zyrians 2016). All endonyms of the Komi-Zyrians subgroups derive from the names of the rivers (the tributaries of the Pechora River) that flow in the Republic of Komi and on the banks of which each subgroup resides. Each group has its own distinctive features represented and mirrored in various aspects of life, including linguistic features, i.e. specific dialects of the Komi language, as well as in traditional costumes, traditional activities and practices.

None of the Komi ethnic subgroups, as well as Komi-Zyrians, Komi Permyaks or Komi Yazvintsy in general, are recognized as indigenous small-numbered peoples with the Russian legal framework. It impedes them from seizure the opportunities Russian laws offer for indigenous ethnic groups. Nevertheless, some of the indigenous small-numbered peoples, including Mansi, Nenets, and Khanty, reside in the Komi Republic. The municipalities of their

⁹ Some of the researchers, including Vasiliy Lytkin, also recognize another independent Komi group, namely Komi Yazvintsy who reside in the north-eastern part of Perm Krai (Lytkin 1961, 3).

¹⁰ Komi Voityr (In Komi: *Ками воитыр*) – Komi people, Komi family.

¹¹ Here the endonyms are used.

settlement include Izhemsky and Ust-Tsilemsky rayons, and urban okrugs (districts) of Usinsk and Inta (excluding the cities of Usinsk and Inta) (Rossiyskaya Gazeta 2015).

In the end of this subchapter, I assume that it is also important to include a brief description of the Republic's nature and particularly introduce the Pechora River, equally important for residents of the Republic of Komi and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug. More than 70 % of the Republic's territory is taken by forests, around 8 % – by bogs, and 1 % – by lakes. Two biggest protected areas in the Republic of Komi are Yugyd Va National Park and Pechora-Ilych National Reserve, both of which are included in the Virgin Komi Forests, a natural UNESCO World Heritage site. According to Degteva et al. (2014, 478), there are all together 240 protected areas of all types as defined by the Federal Law “On Specifically Protected Natural Areas” in the Republic of Komi. They occupy the total area of more than 56 thousand sq.km (equal to 13.5 % of the region's area), while most of them are located in the area of the Pechora River basin.

The longest (the total length is 1 809 km) river, which flows in the Republic and which also has the biggest annual discharge, is the aforementioned Pechora River, which crosses the republic from the Ural Mountains to the very north-western parts of Komi and then flows to Nenets Autonomous Okrug, where it reaches the Barents Sea (see Appendix No. 3). The half of the Republic's cities and rayons located within its basin. The River has undoubtedly vital, even sacral meaning for people who live in its basin. Firstly, it is one of the primary sources of livelihood and food. The Pechora salmon and other valuable fish species have been well known not only in the Republic of Komi, but also in the neighbouring regions. Unfortunately, due to various anthropogenic impacts on the environment, which are discussed later in the thesis, amount of fish has decreased drastically. Secondly, the Pechora River is an important, and in some settlements the only one traffic artery. Even nowadays, the Pechora River and most of its tributaries are navigable, although the fact that the river with the tributaries are drying up is doubtless. Additionally, for years, the Pechora was used as a transportation route for timber rafting.

In terms of the spiritual meaning of the Pechora River, it is important to understand that the River is practically a home land for all the people, and particularly, for the Komi, as well as Nenets, ethnic groups, residing on its banks and within its basin. As it has already been mentioned before, a huge part of their lives and everyday routine is highly interconnected with the River. It is especially applicable to majority of the local residents of rural areas: their ancestors, and ancestors of these ancestors, who had settled all the way down the Pechora River, lived here for the decades and even centuries. The main cities and villages located on the banks

of the Pechora River are Pechora, Vuktyl, Naryan-Mar (in Nenets Autonomous Okrug), Ust'-Tsilma, and Troitsko-Pechorsk. Indeed, the River together with forest have always been not only the source of sustenance, but also part of traditional culture of local people and their consciousness and worldview (Semyashkina 2011, 46). The principles "take only as much as necessary to life" and "do not harm the environment" have been the guiding determinants in local nature-human relationship (Markov 2011, 18). The image of the Pechora River was also widely reflected in Izhma-Kolva epos, which was recorded in 1950-70s on the basis of the poems from the Izhma and Pechora rayons, Kola, Kanin, and Yamal Peninsulas (Panyukov 2015, 118). In addition, the Pechora River is also caroled in the folk songs, poems, and other literary writings and oral folk arts.

5.1.2. The Nenets Autonomous Okrug

The Nenets Autonomous Okrug (NAO) occupies 176.7 thousand sq. km (an area of roughly the same size as Uruguay), which makes it to be the 20th region of Russia by area. The region is situated in the northern part of European Russia (see Appendix No. 1). The NAO is surrounded by Arkhangelsk oblast (in the west), the Republic of Komi (in the south) and the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug (in the east), which, as the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, also has the dual administrative status – it is simultaneously a federal subject itself and part of another federal subject, namely, Tyumen oblast. The northern coast of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug is bordered by the waters of the Barents, Kara, Pechora, and White seas. The climate of the region can be characterized as harsh and severe; more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the region is located in the tundra climatic zone beyond the Arctic Circle, while permafrost occupies almost the entire central and north-eastern parts of NAO (Russian-travels.ru 2010; Nenets Autonomous Okrug 2017).

As it has been already mentioned, Nenets Autonomous Okrug is simultaneously a subject of Russia and part of neighboring Arkhangelsk oblast. According to the part 4 of the Art. 66 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, "the relations between the autonomous area within a territory or region may be regulated by the federal law or a treaty between the bodies of state authority of the autonomous area and, accordingly, the bodies of state authority of the territory or region" (The Constitution of the Russian Federation 2017). According to the Art. 2 of the Statute of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, unification of the Okrug with other subjects of the Russian Federation may be implemented only on the basis of majority rule of the citizens, who reside in the Okug and possess a right to vote (The Statute of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug 2007).

However, it is important to mention that overall relations between two regions are and have been quite tense. For a long time, the main issues have been taxation, budget revenues, and

governance. On January 1, 2004, amendments to the federal law “On General Principles of the Organization of Legislative and Executive Bodies of State Power of the Subjects of the Russian Federation” came into legal force. According to them, the revenues of autonomous regions (okrugs and oblast), as well as most of the administrative and political functions, were transferred to the regions, which they were part of, unless they had an agreement that defined a procedure of division of powers and jurisdictions between two regions. In 2005, 2006, and 2007 Arkhangelsk Oblast and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug had such agreements, according to which the Okrug transferred part of its revenues to the oblast budget, and the oblast, in its turn, did not interfere in the administration of the Okrug (The Nenets Autonomous Okrug 2017). At the same time the protest sentiments were spreading in the Okrug. In 2008 the agreement was not signed and certain authorities were transferred to the oblast, however, Arkhangelsk oblast did not manage to effectively execute its authority in the Nenets Autonomous Area, therefore, in 2009 the process of gradual return of authorities, particularly, in the sphere of employment, health care, and vocational education was launched. In 2014 the Okrug received back the right for self-regulation in the social sphere and agriculture and from 2015 on the Nenets Autonomous Okrug has been executing all powers and authorities independently (7x7 2013; 7x7 2014b).

Administratively, the Okrug is divided into the following units: 1 city (Naryan-Mar), 1 rayon (Zapolyarniy), which includes 1 worker’s settlement (Iskateley), 1 village (Amderma), and 17 *selsovety*¹² (Andegsky, Velikovisochny, Kaninsky, Karsky, Kolguevsky, Kotkinsky, Malozemelsky, Omsky, Peshsky, Primorsko-Kuysky, Pustozersky, Telvisochny, Timansky, Khorey-Versky, Khoseda-Khardsky, Shoinsky, and Yusharsky). Less than 44 thousand people live in the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, which makes the region to be the least populated subject of the Russian Federation; approximately 56 % of population reside in Naryan-Mar, the capital of the region and its only city. The population density in the region is 0.25 / sq. km, the second lowest value in entire Russia (the ultimate leader in this regard is the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, where around 50 thousand people reside on the total area of 737.7 thousand sq. km). According to the 2010 Census, more than 50 nationalities reside in the Okrug, nevertheless, the biggest share of population is taken by the Russians (66 %), the Nenets (approximately 19 %), and Komi people (around 9 %). Historically, the area was populated by the Nenets, first Komi and Russians started to settle here in the 16th century, while the major influx of the Russians came in the 1930s (Tuisku 2002, 189). As it has already been stated in previous chapters, the

¹² “Rural councils”, Russian: “сельсоветы”; a singular form: “сельсовет”, “selsovet”. The transliterated Russian terms are used in the thesis.

Nenets people are by the Russian law officially recognized as indigenous small-numbered people. More substantial presentation of this ethnic group is included in the next subchapter.

Not going too deeply into the history of the region, it is still important to mention that the modern Okrug was formed as an independent entity in July 1929 as the Nenets Okrug, which was renamed into the Nenets National Okrug a year after. The Nenets National Okrug was the first national okrug established on the Russian Far North (Vokrug Sveta 2017). Previously, the region had been a component of other administrative and territorial constructs, such as Mezen and Pechora districts. Reindeer herding, hunting, and angling were the principal activities that were the main livelihoods of the local population. Starting from the early Soviet years with acquisition of independent status the region started to experience the rapid and strong changes in various spheres of life, which include, among other things, expansion of education, development of transportation system, construction of new routes and buildings, industrialization, electrification, etc. Later, in 1950s, the next stage of development of the region started, which was characterized by geological exploration and extraction of oil and natural gas, which in their turn led to the consequent influx of people into the region, primarily, those engaged in extractive and geological activities, and development of transportation and infrastructure. The situation generally resembles the one, which has been described above in relation to the Komi Republic. Oil and gas extraction edging out reindeer herding and other traditional activities steadily became the main economic activity and the main budget contributor in the NAO. Currently, fuel and energy complex accounts up to 90 % of the total volume of industrial production in the region (Getman 2008).

Apart from oil and gas reserves, the Nenets Autonomous Okrug possesses the deposits of coal, manganese, nickel, copper ore, zinc ore, molybdenum, gold, diamonds, although, most of the deposits are not fully explored (The Nenets Autonomous Okrug 2017).

Nevertheless, it is essential to mention that despite the overwhelming domination of the fuel and energy complex and mineral resources extraction sector, the traditional activities, and particularly reindeer herding, still play their prominent and constituent role in economic composition of the region, as well as in overall local people's well-being. The reindeer pastures occupy more than 70% of the region's area (more than 123 thousand sq. km), where 11% of all reindeer in Russia are grazed (The Union of the reindeer herders of NAO 2015). At the same time, it stays clear that any type of production organized in the region will surely affect pastures, reindeer and consequently people engaged in reindeer herding and generally the residents of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug.

5.2. Izhma Komi and the Nenets people and their indigenous and related organizations

5.2.1 Izvatas

Izhma Komi, or Izvatas, as an ethnic group was formed by the 18th century as a result of interethnic marriages between the Vym' and Udora Komi, the Russians and Nenets. Reindeer herding, adopted from the Nenets and adjusted to their needs, made Izhma Komi the only one Komi ethnic group practicing this activity. In the 19th century Izhma Komi started to migrate to Western Siberia and Kola Peninsula due to the shortages of fields for reindeer and demographic threat from the southern parts of the area of the contemporary Komi Republic, which led to creation of Izhma Komi settlements and Izhma diaspora in contemporary Murmansk oblast, Tyumen oblast, Yamalo-Nenets and Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrugs (Povod 2006, 224-226). The Izhma dialect of the Komi language has been strongly affected by the Nenets (especially, those lexical units that are directly related to reindeer herding practices) and Russian language. In terms of the “national character” and self-consciousness, Izhma Komi are known to be active, mobile, ready to be adjusted to and adjust the external conditions. Additionally, according to Terebikhin and Shabaev (2012, 35) a high level of group solidarity, strong historical memory, as well as opposition to the Zyrians and self-detachment also set Izhma Komi apart from the other subgroups of Komi Zyrians. From the other hand, the question of self-positioning among other Komi is still a topical one. The fieldtrips to the Izhma Komi's settlements in Izhemsky rayon, Kola Peninsula, and Nenets Autonomous Okrug, which were undertaken within the framework of the “Izva Komi: Building an annotated digital corpus for future research on Komi speech communities in northernmost Russia” project, have shown that while attempting to determine themselves, majority of both local Izvatas, who reside in Izhemsky rayon, and the descendants of resettlers tend to call themselves as either separate ethnic group, or unique group among the other Komi ethnic groups, while engagement in reindeer herding practices is often regarded as determining and distinguishing factor:

Q: And how do you call yourself, are you Izvatas? Or are you Komi or who are you?

A: We are Komi, but nonetheless, we are Izvatas. We are Izvatas ... because Izvatas is self-denomination, if we came from here [from Izhemsky rayon], so we are Izvatas. Komi people settle even in the southern rayons [of the Komi Republic], they don't even know, for example, reindeer herding life, and northern – they are Izhemtsy, they have preserved life[style] of reindeer herders. (Faina Timofeevna Davydova, interview).

Currently, the biggest Izhma Komi groups are settled in Izhemsky, Usinsky, and Pechorsky rayons of the Republic of Komi. According to the Census of 2010, a total of 6579 Izhma Komi live in Russia, including such regions as Ivanovskaya, Arkhangelskaya, Chelyabinskaya, and

Tomskaya oblasts, Nenets Autonomous Okrug and Udmurtia (1 person has identified himself / herself as Izhma Komi in each of the aforementioned regions), Smolenskaya, Leningradskaya, and Pskovskaya oblasts, Krasnodarsky Krai, and Tatarstan (2 Izhma Komi in each region), Krasnoyarsky Krai and Moskovskaya oblast (3), Tverskaya oblast (4), Moscow (5), Kirovskaya oblast (11), St Petersburg (18), Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug (50), Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug (108), Tyumenskaya oblast (164), Murmanskaya oblast (472), and the Komi Republic (5725 people have identified themselves as Izhma Komi) (Census 2010). However, the numbers presented above cannot claim to be utterly objective and, as a matter of fact, are debated by the researchers and members of ethnic and indigenous organizations. They assume that the real number of Izhma Komi should be higher than one presented in the results of the Census 2010. Indeed, if we take Nenets Autonomous Okrug as an example, according to the Census 2010, only 1 person has identified himself / herself as Izhma Komi, while 3623 people have identified themselves as Komi, generally. Considering the undoubted historical bonds between the Nenets and Izhma Komi, an assumption that only 1 Izhma Komi resides in the Okrug is indeed suspicious. The rationale behind the potentially lower than expected number of Komi Izhma nationals includes several causes: 1) Izhma Komi identify themselves as Komi, not specifying particular attachment to the Izhma ethnic group; 2) in some cases they are ashamed of their origin and language, thus, in some cases they may even identify themselves as Russians (this case is also applicable to other Komi ethnic groups); 3) children of mixed marriage of Izhma Komi and a representative of other (Russian, Nenets, Khanty, etc.) nationality may choose to identify themselves as a representative of that other nationality. Interestingly that attachment to ethnicity and origin is stronger among those Izhma Komi who migrated to the Nenets and Khanty-Mansi autonomous okrug than those who reside in the Republic of Komi, especially in other rayons than Izhemsky (Fedina 2016). Indeed, even according to the official statistics, the biggest Izhma Komi diasporas reside in the regions, which received groups of Izhma Komi resettlers in the past, namely in Murmansk oblast, Yamalo-Nenets and Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug, and Tyumen oblast. The reasons for it are more of the historic-psychological nature and lie in longstanding struggles of the resettlers for a right to live on a particular territory.

Izhma Komi's representative organization, *Izvatias*, is one of the most influential regional ethnic and public associations. The organization was established in 1990 and used the ethnic group's endonym as its title. In the very beginning of *Izvatias* existence its members set preservation of the Komi Izhma language and culture, monitoring of abidance of the Izhma Komi people's rights and interests as the main goals of the organization's business. Their attempts to force

authorities to declare Izvatas as an indigenous minority are long-lasting, but so far unsuccessful, even though Izhma Komi meet the requirements established by the law “On indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East of the Russian Federation”, i.e. they reside on the territory on traditional settlement of their ancestors, they preserve traditional way of life and traditional occupation, they identify themselves as independent community, and they do not exceed 50 thousands peoples. Lack of the indigenous status prevents Izhma Komi from grasping an opportunity to use financial and social benefits such status may give such as tax-free possession of land and an opportunity to negotiate with resources users over land use (Stammler and Peskov 2008, 840; Wilson 2016, 79). In 2000s the Greens and ecological activists joined *Izvatas*; at the same time the organization rethought and changed its main priorities to maintenance of control over the territory of Izhma Komi’s residence and areas of traditional usage of natural resources and land. Currently, in its operations and activities the organization is guided by this aforementioned objective. According to *Izvatas*’s web site, the interregional public movement “protects the original habitat of the Izhma Komi and their right to a traditional way of life, organizes a public control of compliance with environmental legislation by the companies working in the areas of residence of the Izhma Komi” (Miyani Izhma med’s’a dona 2016).

The biggest achievements of *Izvatas* in regard to environmental protection are associated with a halt of attempts to organize illegal oil production in the national reserve in the Sebys River basin on the territories of Izhma Komi’s traditional residence and natural resources usage in early 2000s, an appeal to the management of Plesetsk Cosmodrome with a concern that the spent stages of rockets fell on the territory of the rayon in 2004, and continuous protection of the reindeer herders’ rights, for example, in the case of construction of the Bovanenkovo-Ukhta gas pipeline in 2008, when the reindeer pastures, which were leased by the Izhma agriculture cooperative “A Reindeer Herder”, were illegally occupied and violated by the constructors of the pipeline. Also, in order to preserve and develop the land of traditional residence and traditional usage of natural resource the movement initiated the annual Feast of the hunters, which is organized in the village of Lasta, and also revived a folk festival Lud, which later received an inter-regional status bringing Izhma Komi people from all over Russia together.

According to the movement’s official web-site, the highest governing body of *Izvatas* is the Congress, which is convened at least once in every four years (Miyani Izhma med’s’a dona 2016). The Congress elects the Council, the Chairman of the Council, and the audit commission. The Council, which combines 23 representatives of Izhma Komi, who reside in different regions, operates ad interim the assemblies of the Congress. The Presidium of the Council

consists of 11 persons, majority of whom live in Izhemsky rayon. Currently, the movement brings together Izhma Komi people organized on territorial and ethnic grounds in 12 regional branches and fraternities and has a status of interregional public movement. As it was already briefly mentioned, Izvatas is a member of the Coordination Council of the Russian Association of Indigenous Small-Numbered Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East (RAIPON).

Another organization that should be introduced is the Save the Pechora Committee. Although, the organization is not indigenous one, however, many of its members are Izhma Komi or their sympathizers, thus I assume it is possible to introduce the Committee in continuation of the discussion about the Izhma Komi people. The Save the Pechora Committee, as well as Silver Taiga, The Ecologists of Komi, and undoubtedly Greenpeace Russia are the most eminent ecological and environmental organizations operating in the Komi Republic. The main aims of the Save the Pechora Committee, which was established in September 1989, and is regarded as possibly the most relevant organization in terms of combatting ecological and environmental harm of oil production in the Komi Republic, are protection of the natural habitat of various species of fish and animals, collaboration and co-operation on the environmental and ecological issues and promoting the role of local communities in debates on natural resources extraction (Save the Pechora Committee 2016). The activities of Save the Pechora Committee, although highly concentrated on the problem of oil spills, are not only limited by this sphere – the organization aims rather on the overall engagement in the issues concerning the Pechora River, its flora and fauna, as well as the associate problems of the local population. One of the biggest achievements of the Committee was an initiative to hold an all-Republic referendum in 1992 on four following issues: 1) creation of a national park in the Republic of Komi, 2) declaration of a moratorium on the construction of a nuclear power plant near the town of Inta, 3) prohibition of installation of the fish counting fences in the Pechora River's mouth, and 4) prohibition of the nuclear tests at the Novaya Zemlya testing area. Though the referendum was not held, all of the Committee's propositions were taken into account and implemented. Another example of the successful activities of the Committee is associated with the Usinsk oil spill happened in 1994. Komineft, an oil company on which field the oil spill started, was given a huge loan against guarantees of the Russian government for liquidation of the accident's consequences. Save the Pechora Committee insisted that part of the loan had to be allocated for rehabilitation of the settlements affected by the oil spill. Currently, according to Valentina Semyashkina, due to increasing number of the oil spills the major work is done exactly on the problem of the repercussions of oil production in the Republic of Komi (Valentina Semyashkina, author's interview).

Due to the common goals and similar environmental agenda, both organizations work in close cooperation with each other; more than that, many of the members of Izvatas are at the same time are actively engaged in activities of Save the Pechora Committee (Save the Pechora Committee 2013). Nowadays, many of the ongoing and past projects dedicated to the environmental issues and nature protection in general and oil spills and other adverse consequences of oil extraction in particular in the Republic of Komi were and are jointly organized by Save the Pechora Committee, Izvatas, and Greenpeace Russia. One the last instances, which involve the Save the Pechora Committee, Izvatas, and Ecologists of Komi, are the joint letters to the President of the Russian Federation, Minister of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation, the Head of the Republic of Komi, and the State Council of the Republic of Komi, describing environmental organizations' concernment of the recent merger of the Republic's Ministry of Natural Resources and Ministry of Industry¹³ (7x7, 2016).

5.2.2. The Nenets.

The Nenets are a subgroup of the Samoyedic branch of the Uralic language family. According to the Census 2010 there are approximately 45 thousand Nenets residing in 73 regions of Russia; the most populous groups live in Tyumenskaya oblast (31621 Nenets, including 1438 from the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug and 29772 from Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug), Arkhangel'skaya oblast (8020, including 7504 from the Nenets Autonomous Okrug), Krasnoyarskiy Krai (3633), the Komi Republic (503), Murmanskaya oblast (149), and St. Petersburg (109). As it was already mentioned the Nenets belong to the indigenous small-numbered people and thus are granted with the rights peculiar to this group. By the features of the language the Nenets are divided into two groups: Tundra Nenets and Forest Nenets. It is estimated that only 2 thousand Nenets speak the Forest dialect, while others speak the Tundra dialect (The Nenets 2017).

The main traditional activity of the Nenets is reindeer herding. While previously reindeer herding was regarded as primarily nomadic activity, at the same being practiced mainly by separate families¹⁴, during the Soviet period, with formation of cooperatives, kolkhozes and

¹³ According to Decree of the Head of the Republic of Komi "On the government of the Republic of Komi" No. 125 from 20 October 2016, the portfolios of Minister of Natural Resources and Minister of Industry, Energy, and Transport were merged in a portfolio of Minister of Industry, Natural Resources, Energy, and Transport (Official web portal of the Komi Republic 2016a).

¹⁴ Reindeer herding has been a traditional activity of the Nenets people throughout the entire time they lived in the European North of Russia. Nevertheless, only when Izhma Komi people started to practice reindeer herding in the 18th century, borrowing and improving the techniques and methods from the Nenets, it fully acquired the commercial sense and turned into prosperous and profitable business (Povod

sovkhozes, it was highly commercialized and turned into more settled activity. Eventually, “nomadic herding become part of the soviet economy and <...> the tundra effectively became an open-air meat factory where the nomads were workers of the soviet agricultural system with fixed contracts and salaries” (BBC 2014). At the same time with ongoing commercialization of reindeer herding another process took place, namely sedentarization of Nenets nomads (Tuisku 2001, 45). As a result, the number of people permanently staying in the tundra was drastically decreased. According to Tuisku (ibid.), “because the presence of men was necessary to herding, only women, small children (school-aged children were already in residential schools) and elderly retired people, deemed "unproductive" nomads, were to be settled in the villages”.

Although, as it was already mentioned reindeer herding is being superseded by natural resource extractive industry, it is still play a vital role for well-being of indigenous communities. Moreover, besides its economic importance, reindeer herding is equally significant in terms of its contribution to and role in traditional Nenets culture, outlook, way of living, language, and traditions. According to Degteva, “without reindeer herding the Nenets would unlikely manage to preserve their outstanding distinctiveness from the non-native population and would not be able to preserve their culture” (2006, 41). In the end of the 20th century only 14 % of Nenets people were engaged in reindeer herding directly, even though at the time it was and still is “the cultural core of Nenets identity” (Tuisku 2002, 190). According to Tuisku “reindeer provide the material for fur clothes, footwear and portable dwellings in the tundra while reindeer meat is the basics of nutrition. Although there are snowmobiles in the tundra, reindeer are the most important means of transportation” (ibid., 194).

When talking about the indigenous and related organizations of the Nenets people, I will focus only on the organizations that are established and active in the Nenets Autonomous Okrug. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that besides the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, the indigenous organizations, which unite the Nenets, are also active in Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug (Yugra Salvation; unites Khanty, Mansi, and Nenets people), and Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug (Yamal to Its Descendants; unites the Nenets, Khanty and Selkups).

In regard to the NAO, Yasavey and the Union of the reindeer herders of Nenets Autonomous Okrug should be mentioned.

Yasavey is the biggest Nenets indigenous organization with a status of interregional public movement, which has a right of legislative initiative. It was formed in 1989 and set its objectives

2006, 224; Stammer and Ivanova 2016a, 67). At the same time, with ongoing enrichment of Izhma Komi, the Nenets population was not that auspicious in this regard.

to solution of the social and economic problems of the Nenets people, promotion of their ethnic identity, and preservation of their language, culture, and traditional way of life. The board of the movement consists of the Congress, the Council, and the Council of Elders. According to its website, “Yasavey participates in the development of programs for the socio-economic development of indigenous peoples of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, promotes the nomination of its representatives to the bodies of state and local authorities, contributes to the preservation and development of traditional economic sectors, habitat, and way of life, promotes the preservation of the Nenets language, participates in the implementation of the training program for national staff, participates in the development of joint efforts to protect the environment” (25 years of Yasavey 2014).

As for the Union of reindeer herders of Nenets Autonomous Okrug, according to its official web site, it is “a nonprofit organization established for the purpose of protecting original habitat, traditional way of life, rights and interests of indigenous peoples” (The Union of reindeer herders of NAO 2015). The organization was established in September, 2010 upon an initiative of Alexander Vyucheykiy by three family reindeer communities, namely “Vark, “Vy tu”, and “Opseda”. Currently, the Union unites more 6 family reindeer communities and 8 agricultural production cooperatives, which in total comprise more than half of the reindeer farms of the Okrug. The main objectives of the organization are to improve the lives of the reindeer herders living and working in the harsh conditions of the Far North, to preserve and promote the linguistic, cultural and ethnic identity of the Nenets, and to protect the rights and interests of people conducting the traditional activities on the area of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug. The Union participates in the various Russian and international conferences devoted to the problems of reindeer herders and indigenous peoples, advises the reindeer herders on legal and economic issues, as well as assists on accounting, registration and re-registration of non-profit organizations, and works actively in the field of natural resources use, ecology, and environmental protection (The Union of reindeer herders of NAO 2015). Amongst the achievements of the organization the following should be mentioned: set-up of the floating gas station at the site of the Nenets Oil Company (in 2013), provision of the nomad Nenets living in the tundra with firewood (since 2012), provision of chums to three reindeer husbandry farms (2012), organization of summer vacation for the children from indigenous families (2015). Apart from that, the Union of reindeer herders of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug actively interacts with regional authorities and directly participates in solving the existing problems.

5.3. Oil industry in the Komi Republic and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug

As it was already mentioned, oil production is one of the fundamentals of the Republic and Okrug's economies and regional, as well as municipal, budgets. The Komi Republic and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug's reserves and resources of oil, as well as gas, are located in the central and southern parts of the Timan-Pechora Basin Province (TPBP) that, as its name suggests, lies in approximate location with the Pechora River Basin (see Appendix No. 4). In terms of total amount of recoverable hydrocarbon resources the TPBP is the third largest Russia's province, preceded by Western Siberian and Ural-Volga provinces (Glukhareva 2010, 507). Overall, the Basin is geographically shared by two neighboring regions, namely, the Komi Republic and Nenets Autonomous Okrug, while participation in exact oil extraction and refining activities is also shared with mainland Arkhangelsk oblast. The TPBP includes Izhma-Pechora, Pechora-Kolva, Khorei-Ver-More-Yu, Northern Preurals oil and gas basins, as well as Ukhta-Izhma oil and gas region (see Appendix No. 2). The richest oil fields are Usinksoye, Yaregskoye and Vozeiskoye, all located in the Republic of Komi. Some of the most prominent oil fields of the Timan-Pechora Basin are located in the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, namely in its Arctic part. One of them is Prirazlomnoye, the only Russian active Arctic offshore oil field located in the Pechora Sea, administratively in Nenets Autonomous Okrug. The oil field became worldwide (in)famous in 2013 due to the Greenpeace protests against Gazprom's Arctic oil drilling operations and consequent seizure of the Greenpeace's Arctic Sunrise ship with 25 activists on board (Greenpeace 2013). As of 2013, there were 89 oil and gas fields explored in Nenets Autonomous Okrug, while 77, or in other words more than 85 %, of them were exactly oil fields (Republic of Bashkortostan 2015). 26 of these fields are being actively developed, 11 are ready for development, 29 are being studied, and 2 deposits are conserved for the future generations. As for the Republic of Komi, out of all 163 hydrocarbon deposits, oil and gas are produced on 83 of them (Official web portal of the Komi Republic B).

The oil fields located in Komi have a long history of their development in comparison with the ones located in the Nenets Autonomous Okrug. The very first oil field in the region was located on the bank of the Ukhta River, where oil extraction started already in the middle of 18th century (Gumenyuk 2015, 492). Nevertheless, beginning of consistent development of oil fields in the Timan-Pechora Province is associated with later years, namely, with 1920-30s. Currently, according to Gerasimov (2010, 1266) the level of oil fields exploitation in the Republic of Komi is extremely high, majority of oil fields either have reached their maximum of oil extraction and currently decreasing extraction, or currently are on the top of production. As for the Nenets Autonomous Orkug, here oil exploration and production started in 1984 at the Kharyaga field

that is located near the border with the Komi Republic (see Appendix No. 2) (Degteva, Ponomarev, Eisenman & Dushenkov 2014, 475).

It is estimated that one third of the entire Basin's hydrocarbon feedstock is located in the Komi Republic, while the Okrug possesses two thirds of it. Nevertheless, the level of oil fields development is exactly the opposite (Nordport.ru 2006). The main issue preventing larger scale of oil fields development in the Nenets AO is high cost of extracted oil due to poor infrastructure and severe climate and permafrost, weakly developed transportation routes and poor facilities that the region possesses¹⁵. More than that, exactly due to the extremely fragile character of northern nature the negatives consequences of oil extraction, e.g. water and soil pollution, have much greater impact here in Nenets Autonomous Okrug than in the southern regions.

The main rayons of the Komi Republic possessing oil fields and involved in oil extraction are Pechorsky, Usinsky, Ukhtinsky, Izhemsky, and to lesser extent Ust-Tsilemsky, all of them are located in the central, northern and north-western parts of Komi (Buryi, Kalinina & Lukanicheva 2013, 66-68). In the Nenets Autonomous Okrug the oil fields are spread in the region's central part from the border with the Republic of Komi to the Pechora Sea, where some of the deposits are located.

In terms of oil extraction activities at the Komi part of the Timan-Pechora Basin, the main operating companies, which take almost 85 % of total share of oil extraction, are Lukoil Komi, which has the biggest market share (78,3 %), and Rosneft Northern Oil¹⁶ (7,6 %) (Expert North-West 2016; Official web portal of the Republic of Komi B). Alongside with them, there are quite a lot of small and medium size companies operating in oil industry as well. According to Lisin (2011, 55), there are altogether 37 organizations that are engaged in oil extraction (15 companies), oil transportation (JSC Northern Oil Trunk Pipelines¹⁷), oil processing (LLC Lukoil Ukhta Oil Refinery¹⁸), and oil and oil products storage (20 companies). In the Nenets Autonomous Okrug's turn, as of 2015, there were 26 oil companies operating in the region, the biggest of which were Lukoil-Komi, Rusvietpetro, Bashneft-Polyus, Rosneft, and VostokNAO (Evgeniya Nosova, author's questionnaire).

¹⁵ There is still no railway connection with the NAO, the closest railway station is located in Usinsk, the Republic of Komi. Moreover, there are no other interregional roads, except for the sole winter road (*zimnik* in Russian) that connects Naryan-Mar with Usinsk. The road is known as "The road of life" among the local population. Thus, in the summer the region can be reached only by plane or ferry-boat.

¹⁶ In Russian: *ООО "РН-Северная нефть"*.

¹⁷ In Russian: *ОАО «Северные магистральные нефтепроводы»*.

¹⁸ In Russian: *ООО «Лукойл-Ухтанефтепереработка»*.

The role the oil companies play in two regions is indeed impressive. Firstly, it is important to mention their indisputable importance for the regions, especially, in monetary terms. As in 2006, in the Nenets Autonomous Okrug the oil and gas sector attracted 84% of the total investments in the region, allocate 98% of the total industrial production of the region, and 60.8% of the Okrug's gross regional product (On the adjustment of the Strategy of social and economic development of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug for the perspective up to 2030, 2016). Up to 66 % of all taxes collected in the Republic are coming from the companies from the oil and gas industry (Buryi, Kalinina & Lukanicheva 2013, 73). According to Fridman (2011, 7), in 2010 51 % of all government revenues were collected from the natural resource extractive companies; these allocations are proceeded within the framework of mutual agreements and contracts between such companies and regional, as well as municipal authorities. Such agreements are also inherent in the Nenets Autonomous Okrug. The first cooperative agreement of this kind was signed between the Republic of Komi and Lukoil in the end of 1990s (ibid., 9). Here it is important to add that oil companies play an important role supporting development of the local communities in both regions. At some point, it is quite common for the industrial cities and regions of Russia in general to have the key companies operating there as one of the main supporters of their local community's resilience and vitality. In this regard, co-operation between municipal and regional authorities and Lukoil and Rosneft is indeed plentiful: starting from sponsorship of the various youth contests and competitions to participation of renovation of hospitals, schools, roads, etc. From this point of view, it is interesting to observe the oil companies' (Lukoil Komi and Rosneft Severnaya Neft) image created by official media in the Komi Republic (*Komiinform* and *BNK*¹⁹) and the NAO (*Naryana Vynder* and *The Choice of the NAO*²⁰). During a search for the news associated with two aforementioned companies in *BNK* and *Komiinform*, it turned out that absolute majority of the results were describing either huge importance of bilateral agreements between the oil companies and regional authorities, or the ways how the companies had supported the local community (in terms of infrastructure, education, and opportunities for self-realization). As for the Nenets press, the number of articles reporting the cases of oil spills or any other negative consequences of oil production is dramatically lower than the number of articles about the extractive and other activities of the

¹⁹ BNK and Komiinform are two largest information agencies in the Republic of Komi. Besides, Komiinform was the first governmental information agency established in the region.

²⁰ "Naryana Vynder" (In Russian: "Красный тундровик", in English: "A red tundra man") and "The choice of the NAO" (in Russian: "Выбор НАО") are the sociopolitical newspapers of Nenets Autonomous Okrug. "Naryana Vynder" has been published since 1929 both in the Russian and Nenets languages, "The choice of the NAO" has been published since 2007 in Russian. Both newspapers have their own web portals. The Assembly of Deputies of Nenets Autonomous Okrug is either a founder (in case of "The choice of the NAO"), or a co-founder (in case of "Naryana Vynder") of the newspapers.

oil companies. Almost all of the results associated with the cases of oil spills in the NAO are linked to the spills happened on the Kharyaga field and the field named after Roman Trebs in 2012. Ironically, even the articles covering the emergency and oil spill response exercises outnumber the ones that convey the exact cases of the actual oil spills.

The ways how local population and oil companies are linked are definitely numerous: participation in an oil company funded contest, the rest and recreation trips for local children organized and sponsored by the same oil company within the framework of aforementioned cooperative agreements and many-many more. Here I would like to accentuate only two instances of such connection: 1) involvement in the environmental campaigns against the activities of the oil companies, and 2) employment in an oil-extractive company. It is important to outline that the features of employment in oil companies are common in both regions, while participation in the protests against oil production is generally more widespread in Komi than in the Okrug.

According to Buriy et al. (2013, 73-75), a local society in the Komi Republic does not really have much influence on the decisions made by the oil companies and federal and regional authorities. From the other hand, it does not mean that local population occupies exclusively neutral or defeatist position. Quite an outstanding stance here is taken by Izhma Komi. According to Fryer and Lehtinen (2013, 35), for Izvatas “defending the community [is] synonymous to defending local nature. In addition, defending local nature [is] synonymous to defending the Izvatas identity of all from the Izhma River in diaspora”. In their absolute majority, the cases of active protests and demonstrations against the activities of oil extractive companies are connected to the IPM *Izvatas* and its sympathizers, as well as to local Izhma Komi community. One of the most recent examples is dedicated to the issue of oil spills on the Lukoil’s oil fields in Izhemsky rayon in 2014, followed by water and land pollution, and subsequent protests and demands of the local population to stop oil production in the district (Krasnoye Znam’a 2014a; Krasnoye Znam’a 2014b). Another way of local community’s involvement in ecological activities is volunteering for the public and environmental NGOs. Interestingly, such involvement can be both official and permanent (e.g. being a member of environmental organization), or unofficial and spontaneous (for each emergency and campaign particularly).

The major type of employment in oil industry, as well as generally in natural resource extractive industry, is work on a rotational basis. People from the southern and central regions of Russia, as well as to some extent from the South Caucasian republics, come to the Komi Republic and Nenets Autonomous Okrug mainly in pursue of higher salaries. According to Nuykina (2013,

107), such workers influence the local settlements and communities in both positive and negative ways. As the examples of positive influence development of infrastructure, establishment of local small enterprises (like shops, canteens, personal services, etc.) can be named, while in terms of the negative consequences a temporary nature of such employment, as well as outpouring of money to the other regions (from the other hand, it supports income redistribution between the regions) are usually referred to.

It is interesting to note that, although, at first sight, these two types of connection, namely employment and commitment to environmental agenda, do not intersect, in some communities exactly the employees from the local settlements working in oil companies trigger the further actions:

A: <...> Very often even people, employees of the [oil] companies, inform where a spill is happening. Well, of course, they do to it that way so that no one [from the companies] will know. And ... Well, there they have their own <...> ... they have such a corporate system, it is possible that you may lose your job because of the leak of information, right? Therefore, they report like that. (Nikolai Rochev, author's interview).

The exact reasons why these employees act in this way have not been discussed during the interviews conducted with the representatives of the indigenous and related organizations and highly probably that little attention have been paid to it in academic and non-academic literature. Nevertheless, it is still possible to assume that while making in some way a moral choice, which may lead to a job loss in area where each job is regarded as precious, these people are guided not only by the individual motives, but also by the concernment about the community and environment's well-being and sustainability. Additionally, exactly this bond to the local community and environment is one the major differences between incoming and local people working under a rotation system.

Finally, it is vital to mention the interconnection between environment and oil companies operating in the Nenets Autonomous Okrug and the Komi Republic.

According to Pyotr Oboronkov (2011, 12), the former CEO of Lukoil Komi, preservation of favourable environment in the regions, where Lukoil is operating, is the key activity area of the company. Indeed, each natural resource extractive company functioning in the Komi Republic (as well as in the NAO) has its own environmental strategy, which is more or less effectively fulfilled. Here it is highly important to understand that possible environmental risks due to the obvious reasons are inherited in business of each and every natural resource extractive organization, which, nevertheless, in no way excuse them from not being active and proactive in terms of environmental protection.

The biggest oil spill ever happened in history of oil extraction in the Komi Republic, and at the same time one of the biggest mainland oil spills in history of worldwide oil extraction, happened on one of the KomiTEK's²¹ oil fields in Usinsky rayon in August 1994. At the time, up to 100 000 tons of oil were spilled, which caused enormous ecological and economic harm. Official damage only from pollution of the water bodies amounted up to 311 billion roubles (in 1995 year prices), the means to handle the spill were questionable: for example, by choosing to set fire on spilled oil the clean-up crew caused damage to fragile and vulnerable tundra fauna (Jernelöv 2010, 359; Vladimirov & Dubnov 2013, 374). Later, in 1999-2000 KomiTEK was absorbed by Lukoil Komi; both the company and ecologists outline that condition of KomiTEK's infrastructure was dramatically poor – the level of equipment deterioration varied from 60 to 100 % (History of Lukoil Komi 2016; Rochev 2016). Currently, Lukoil Komi claims that the biggest part of contaminated area in Usinsky rayon is successfully remediated (Ivanov et al. 2008, 87-94). Lukoil Komi has done a huge work replacing the old infrastructure with the new one, however, still the main accidents connected with the oil spills happen exactly on the transportation stage primarily due to poor condition of the pipelines.

This example, among many others, illustrates that even though the oil extraction activities are implemented mainly in the northern rayons of the region, the hazards caused by them are influencing the Komi Republic on a large scale. Such repercussions are especially obvious in connection to the overall ecological and medical situation in region, regional fauna and flora, as well as in regard to traditional livelihoods and way of life of people living in the republic, especially local people residing in the contaminated areas. The same can also be told about the situation in the Nenets Autonomous Okrug.

In the very end of the chapter, another significant issue should be addressed, namely hiding of oil spills. According to Aleksey Knizhnikov, the WWF's Environmental Policy in Oil and Gas Sector Program Coordinator, "as in entire Russia, oil spills in Nenets Autonomous Okrug are the regularly occurring event, but at the same time not in all cases they are publicly known" (RIA Novosti 2012b). Indeed, the fact that not each and every case of oil spill is reported has been also outlined by the representatives of the public organizations from the Republic of Komi; moreover, while speaking about the oil spills occurred in NAO, they mention that apart from the fact that oil spills "are constantly there", the situation in the region is worsened by the lack (or even absence) of strong environmental and social public organizations that would work actively and oppose "permissiveness and lawlessness" of oil companies, and indirectly by the

²¹ Komi Fuel and Energy Company: in Russian: «КомитЭК» (*Кomi топливо-энергетическая компания*)

extremely low density of population (Nikolai Rochev, author's interview). Possibly, the only oil spills, which happened in the Okrug in recent years, that came into the open were the ones occurred on the Kharyaga field and the field named after Roman Trebs (EcoPortal 2012; RIA Novosti 2012a). Here another, in some way rhetorical, question arises: how many oil spills are being reported and how many from those that have been reported become public knowledge?

At last, a human factor plays its role as well. The cases, when the workers, who are primarily engaged in oil extraction, in the case of oil spill, do not inform their bosses, but instead try to hide the spills, are unfortunately quite common:

A: <...> a worker, he tries to hide it [an oil spill]> immediately, so he will not <...> have any problems like deprivation of the bonuses and so on. If the oil spill has occurred on his site, it means that he was not careful and attentive enough, he did not do anything well, it is clear that in the first instance such people are accused. And they are trying to hide a spill, to hide it from their administration, to quickly close a hole, to quickly strew sand, without revegetation. We even have the cases when moss that grew next to an oil spill was torn off, and the oil spill was covered with moss, but it is already an anecdotal story. (Nikolai Rochev, author's interview).

6. ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES GAINED FROM THE INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS

The chapter is dedicated to the analysis of the responses gained from the representatives of Izvatas and Save the Pechora Committee from the Komi Republic and the Union of reindeer herders. The first paragraph discusses the repercussions of oil production on the Izhma Komi and Nenets communities, while the second paragraph includes the analysis of the role of the indigenous and related organizations in debate on oil spills.

6.1. The consequences and adverse effects of oil production on Izhma Komi and Nenets communities

Because of close location, resembling geographical characteristics, as well as due to the fact that in some cases oil fields in two regions are managed by the same oil companies (e.g. Lukoil-Komi) it is possible to make a hypothesis that the negative impacts of oil production are going to be quite similar in both regions. From the other hand, scale and influence of each particular outcome may differ and have various levels of importance in each community, for instance, due to nomadic or stable nature of such communities. From this perspective, it is possible to assume that such repercussions that will hurt reindeer herds will affect Nenets communities stronger

than Izhma Komi ones due to much higher dependence on reindeer of the nomad Nenets than of the much more sedentary Izhma Komi. As Klovov mentions, “presence of own herd is the main condition for their [Nenets] survival, and its size is an indicator of their social status” (Klovov 2017).

Starting from the effects of oil production and oil spills that affects environment, water and soil pollution, which affects almost all spheres of Nenets and Izhma Komi’s everyday life, should be outlined. The major issues include a limited access to drinking water, as well as decreasing quality of such water, associated health problems, contamination of forest and pastures’ lands, and consequently, contamination of berries, mushrooms, and herbs.

There are reports from the local residents, from fishermen and hunters, that in recent years amount of wildfowl in the forests and fish in the rivers has decreased significantly. In terms of fish, it is also important to mention another locally well-known fact:

A: <...> That fish smells [oil], that is ... I have witnessed it myself a hundred times. And many local people eat it, because, apparently, they got used to it. <...> But they say that it is not always the case. Not always, but very often. (Valentina Semyashkina, author’s interview).

The fact that fish has a smell of oil was also supported by Nikolai Rochev (Nikolai Rochev, author’s interview); additionally, I myself during numerous personal trips and talks with local residents of the Izhemsky rayon have witnessed it as well.

Extermination of the fish populations results in change of a local population’s diet, which is strongly fish and meat dependent, which together with other factors (e.g. worsening climate) leads to increase of incidences of diseases (Evgeniya Nosova, author’s questionnaire).

Switching to reindeer herding, it is possible to outline that, according to Rochev and Nosova (author’s interview, 2016; author’s questionnaire, 2016), there are several ways how reindeer herders may suffer. The first one is already mentioned contamination of soil and water, which leads to impossibility to use certain pastures, which in its turn leads to their degradation and annihilation. As a whole these factors account for the changes in reindeer migration routes. At the same time, it should be mentioned that while changing their routes reindeer herders have to keep them within territories assigned to them, since intrusion into territories of other reindeer herding brigades was, firstly, prohibited and, secondly, sustaining reindeer herds and their pastures strictly within own territory has been an unspoken rule among reindeer herders (Pyotr Khozyainov, author’s interview, Andrey Terentyev, author’s interview). However, in order to protect reindeer, brigades, trying to escape crossing oil fields (as well as big rivers), rarely come close to them, except for extreme situations when brigades experience shortages of food or any

other goods. In these cases, they are approaching oil fields in order to exchange reindeer meat to needed products (Leonid Anufriev, author's interview).

In some cases, more extreme cases may occur, particularly, the death losses in reindeer herds. While conducting drilling operations, oil workers frequently deliberately or accidentally leave wires right on bushes. As reindeer herders report, when reindeer herds cross such places, reindeer may become entangled in wires. As Nosova reports, reindeer traumatism is also increasing due to hounding initiated by workers at oil wells (author's questionnaire 2016). Negligence of workers, who primarily conduct certain operations on oil fields, also cause harm to reindeer herds:

A: <...> Then, a solution, which is poured, salty solution, toxic, although it should be kept in the barns, but they poured it out of the bounds of a site. And when the reindeer come across, of course, they need salt, so they start to lick and then die. Two years ago, 150 reindeer died here because of that. (Nikolai Rochev, author's interview).

Oil spills are potentially the most outstanding example of the repercussions of oil production, but not the only one. Another case of adverse effects of oil production has been given by Valentina Semyashkina:

A: <...> Then, for example, in our Shchelyabozh, a village in Usinsky rayon. Well, near Schelyabozh there is Bayandyskoye oil field, which is very ... <...> in general, there is a lot of hydrogen sulfide there²², and from time to time they have such an extreme smell of hydrogen sulfide <...>. I talked with women, they even said that when an emission happened, they were even afraid to go out, they even called each other and asked, "Have you gone out? I want to go to take water but I do not know how". Like that. Can you imagine? Two years ago, <...> when kids took an exam there, school graduates, and exactly on that day there was a hydrogen sulfide emission, so children had to sit at an exam wearing face masks. (Valentina Semyashkina, author's interview).

In terms of the social consequences of operation of oil companies, the changes in local population's occupations may be addressed. Here it is necessary to mention that in a broad sense occupation of people in rural areas is indeed a topical theme in the Russia's regions. Villages and other rural settlements experience a huge complex of obstacles: decrease of number of population, ageing of remaining population, lack or even absence of jobs, low salaries, poor infrastructure and transportation routes and many more others that collectively lead to marginalization and stigmatization of rural population and rural life (see: Shirokalova & Deriabina, 2012). Taking this into account, oil companies indeed offer such a rare in rural areas possibility to be employed and be able to gain a sufficient salary. From the other hand, even though workers (who are in absolute majority of cases are men) seizing such job

²² Oil that is produced on the Bayandyskoye oil field, located in Usinsky rayon in the Komi Republic, is excessively rich of sulfur (Neftegaz.ru 2015).

opportunities usually earn more than their home folk, comparing to the salaries inside the companies they are being employed in, they still are considered to be a lower echelon. More than that, such job offers are frequently limited to work on rotational basis, which implies that one works on a site for several consecutive weeks or months and then takes a vacation leaves (usually, oil companies use 1/1 scheme, which means that one works for one month and rests for one month, which also means that realistically money that one earns in one-month shift are meant for two-month usage). Such unstable, “migrating” position of such workers, who are usually the most physically capable residents of the villages, definitely affects the local communities. As Rochev (author’s interview, 2016) points out, if there, in the home district, would be the adequate opportunities to be employed, to gain money in order to be able “to feed the family, to bring up children”, many of these men who are now working for oil companies would rather stay at home.

Besides, as it was mentioned, such job offers are generally meant for men only, mainly due to the difficult working conditions and particular requirements related to physical strength and stamina (RAIPON 2013, 16). From that perspective, women stay one of the most vulnerable social group in rural areas (see: Wegren et al. 2015; Kozhina & Shabunova 2012). Lacking traditional employment, they at the same time, during absence of their family members who are employed at oil fields, not only perform their usual responsibilities, but take the responsibilities of the missing relatives, which are usually of difficult physical nature, as well.

6.2. Public and native organizations involvement in the debates on oil production consequences in the Republic of Komi and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug

6.2.1. Public organizations’ relationship with regional and local authorities

A human factor plays enormous role when it comes to discussion about Izvatas, the Save the Pechora Committee, and the Union of reindeer herders’ relations with authorities in the Komi Republic and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug. Quite frequently temper, personality, affiliations of various kinds of people in power define the positions of entire bodies or institutions such people head.

In regard to regional authorities in Komi, the term of Vyacheslav Gaizer as the Head of the Republic (2010-2015) was recognized as the most active stage in terms of cooperation with the public organizations. According to Nikolai Rochev, at that time the regional administration was finally able to determine its attitude towards environmental and social hazards brought by oil production. The administration took quite stable pro-environmental stance and influenced the

dismissal of Pyotr Oboronkov, the former CEO of Lukoil Komi. The official reasons of his dismissal include failure to fulfill the oil production plan, increased number of accidents and traumatism among workers at oil production sites (Krasnoye Znam'a 2015).

As for the previous Heads of the Republic, namely Vladimir Torlopov and Yury Spiridonov, during their terms the situation was quite the opposite and not in favor of environmental and indigenous public organizations. The interview with Nikolai Rochev was conducted in August 2016, a month before the election of the new Head of the Republic and two months before the merge of the Ministry of Industry, Energy, and Transport and the Ministry of Natural Resources, but already at that time the interviewee was quite skeptical about the possible stance on environmental protection the future Head and his administration would take. Indeed, as time told such worries were not groundless. Eventually, on October 17th, 2017 the Ministry of Industry and the Ministry of Natural Resources were merged in the Ministry of Industry, Natural Resources, Energy, and Transport. The merge was highly criticized by general public, three public organizations, namely Ecologists of Komi, the Save the Pechora Committee, and Izvatas wrote several letters to the President of the Russian Federation, the Minister of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation, the Head of the Komi Republic, and State Council of the Komi Republic criticizing the decision. Their position was supported by Silver Taiga Foundation, a public organization, which “was founded in 2002 on the basis of the WWF” and implements “Komi Model Forest, Forest Village and High Conservation Value Forests projects” in the Komi Republic (Silver Taiga 2017). The protests were organized in Usinsky, Izhemsky, and Sosnogorsky rayons, as well as in Syktyvkar by representatives of the Save the Pechora Committee and Izvatas. In June 2017, during the meeting with the heads of the public organizations Izvatas and Komi Voityr Sergey Gaplikov, the Head of the Komi Republic, acknowledge a possibility of separation of one ministry back into the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ministry of Industry (7x7.ru 2017). However, until now (September 2017) no other announcements have been made and 2 former separated ministries still function as united Ministry of Industry, Natural Resources, Energy, and Transport.

Before the October merge of the Ministry of Industry and Ministry of Natural Resources, the constructive relations were established between Izvatas and the Save the Pechora Committee and the Ministry of Natural Resources. Valentina Semyshkina outlined the supportive role the former minister of natural resources, Roman Polshvedkin, had played when it came to the dialogue with the public organizations and cooperation on the issue of oil spills and overall influence of oil production on environment and neighbouring settlements. One of the outstanding

examples of such cooperation was portrayed by a possibility for the members of the Committee to be involved in the work of the annual commissions on acceptance of revegetated lands.

In terms of co-operation with district authorities, Usinsk, the oil capital of the Komi Republic, was recognized as the most unsupportive locality mostly due to the significant role the oil companies play there and influence they have on municipal authorities. Pechora, in its turn, was named as rather proactive in terms of ecological strategy and support (including grants and other forms of financial donation) of the environmental public organizations, including the Save the Pechora Committee. In regard to Pechorskiy rayon it is also important to be mention that the Save the Pechora Committee and Pechora environmental prosecutor's office managed to establish rather successful cooperation. However, supporting the idea of significance of people in charge, such relationship worsened when the prosecutor's office's staff was changed. The same is applicable to the case of Izhemsky rayon: Igor Norkin, the former Head of administration, was rather neglectful in terms of environmental protection, and partly due to this reason became quite unpopular among local population. The situation changed, when the district administration was changed, with which the Save the Pechora Committee currently has "more or less normal cooperation" (Valentina Semyashkina, author's interview).

Overall, according to the responses of the interviewees, municipal authorities tend to occupy rather neutral position in debate on issues caused by oil production. As Nikolai Rochev highlighted it, the authorities are not interested in exacerbation and aggravation of the conflicts with the oil companies, mostly due to the contractual relations they have with them, but at the same time, they usually do not oppose the activities of the public organizations (author's interview, 2016).

As for the case of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, unfortunately, the Union of reindeer herders failed to provide sufficient information about its relations with regional authorities. Nevertheless, the representative of the organization was able to identify that the weaknesses of cooperation with authorities are rooted in authorities' inability to understand the particularities of reindeer herding. As will be shown latter, this "inability to understand" has its effect also in the relationship of the public organizations from the Nenets Autonomous Okrug and the Komi Republic with the oil companies. However, it is important to mention the existing legal tools that should define the nature of such relationship. Firstly, it is "The Concept of Sustainable Development of Indigenous Small-numbered People of the North of Nenets Autonomous Okrug". The Concept "aims at bringing together public authorities, local authorities and public organizations of indigenous small-numbered people of the North of Nenets Autonomous Okrug to meet the challenges of economic, social and cultural development of indigenous small-

numbered people of the North of Nenets Autonomous Okrug” (Nenets Autonomous Okrug 2016a). The objectives of the Conception are: 1) “preservation of original habitat, traditional way of life of indigenous small-numbered peoples and development of economic infrastructure in the areas of their traditional residence and traditional economic activities while maintaining the ecological balance”, 2) “development and modernization of traditional economic activities, increase of the economic efficiency of indigenous small-numbered peoples’ communities’ activities”, 3) “improvement of quality of life of the indigenous small-numbered peoples and improvement of livelihoods and social-infrastructure conditions in the areas of their traditional residence and traditional economic activities”, 4) “enhancement of accessibility and quality of public health service”, 5) “enhancement of quality of education and training of indigenous small-numbered peoples with regard to their ethnic, social and cultural characteristics, creation of favorable conditions for the preservation and development of the Nenets language”, and 6) “preservation and promotion of spiritual and cultural legacy of small-numbered peoples” (ibid.). Apart from this Concept it is equally important to mention other laws and regulations that guarantee the rights of indigenous peoples (including a right to management and control the territories of traditional habitat of indigenous peoples) and reindeer herders, i.e. the law “On reindeer herding in Nenets Autonomous Okrug”, the law “On territories of traditional nature use of indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North in Nenets Autonomous Okrug”, and the state programme “Preservation and development of indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North in Nenets Autonomous Okrug” (Nenets Autonomous Okrug 2017b).

In regard to cooperation on the municipal level, the Union works closely with the prosecutor’s office of Nenets Autonomous Okrug. As was mentioned earlier, in case of the Komi Republic the Save the Pechora Committee has also managed to establish sound cooperation with Pechora environmental prosecutor’s office; the prosecutor’s office of NAO due to absence of the regional environmental prosecutor’s office de-facto take some of its responsibilities. The prosecutor took part in the Congress of the indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North that was organized in Naryan-Mar in 2016 (Nenets Autonomous Okrug 2016b). Apart from it, the prosecutor’s office and the Union are also connected within the framework of a coordination agreement, under which two parties communicate on issues of environmental security, habitat protection, and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples engaged in traditional activities (Naryana Vynder 2014). Besides, in order to prevent violations against environment a working group on environment has been established, which includes representatives of the oversight bodies (ibid.).

In the end of this subchapter and in connection to public organizations' relationship with authorities it is as well significant to mention the public organizations' relationship with official (expressing the opinion of regional authorities) media. The role of local media in reporting the cases of oil spills was assessed as extremely weak and minimal unanimously by Izvatas, the Save the Pechora Committee, and the Union of reindeer herders. Both Rochev and Semyashkina have outlined that they perceive official media as being quite biased and non-objective when reporting the environmental problems and local population and public organizations' involvement in the conflicts with the extractive companies. This question has already been raised and discussed in one of the previous chapters and there in some sense one-sided reporting of the Republic and Okrug biggest news web sites has been revealed. Due to these circumstances, the public organizations are seeking for other forms and channels of communication. In terms of Izvatas and the Save the Pechora Committee these are conferences (including barcamps²³), personal blogs, alternative news websites (for example, 7x7 – Horizontal Russia), personal contacts, and to some extent the organizations' web sites, although they have not been named as a primary tool that is used to spread information. Moreover, Save the Pechora Committee also possesses its own newspaper, which although is not published regularly; in case of Izvatas, even though it does not have its own newspaper, it still uses potential that the local newspaper Ves'kyd Serni²⁴ may offer. Besides, Nikolai Rochev revealed increasing significance of the role social media plays nowadays:

A: ... they [social media] have a very important role in disseminating information. If, for example, my Facebook page is seen by whole Russia, everyone can see, indigenous peoples, representatives of indigenous peoples are in my friends list. If I have some news, I publish it right away, and the next day all Russia knows. They themselves have a lot of friends. Then Greenpeace sees it. And when Greenpeace knows, they direct to their site, so the whole world knows. (Nikolai Rochev, author's interview).

In terms of the Union of the reindeer herders, the main communication channels the organization uses are social media and its own website, which is being regularly updated. Apart

²³ According to the barcamp.org (The Rules of BarCamp 2008): "BarCamp is ad-hoc unconference born from the desire for people to share and learn in an open environment. It is an intense event with discussions, demos and interaction from attendees". The main features of the barcamps are their openness and participants and audience-driven nature. Since 2012 Syktyvkar has held five annual barcamps, which are, according to the movement's official group, "the largest discussion platform in the Republic of Komi, organized entirely by civil society activists and public organizations" (vk.com 2016). The topics covered by the conferences are society, culture, environment, contemporary issues, and many more.

²⁴ In Komi: "*Веськыд сёрни*" (meaning: "Honest dialogue"). The newspaper takes quite an oppositional stance and in a way contrapose itself to the "official" newspaper of Izhemsky rayon, that is New North (in Russian: "*Новый Север*"). The official motto of *Veskyd Serni* is "Nobody has a monopoly on truth, thus, there should not be a monopoly on free speech".

from it, the Union is also spreading information about itself by such means as participation in the annual celebration of the Day of reindeer herder (for example, in 2015 during the celebration the Union managed to sign a cooperation agreement with the Union of reindeer herders of Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug) and by organizing screenings of movies about reindeer herders' life.

6.2.2 Public organizations and oil companies

Discussion about mutual relationship between public organizations and oil companies due to enormous importance of extractive industry for economic well-being of the Republic of Komi and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug and its tight interrelation with authorities of all levels cannot be impossible without constant references to relationship involving all parties: public organizations, authorities, and oil companies.

Nowadays, oil industry and authorities of different levels (federal, regional, and municipal) have much stronger bonds, than even in the Soviet era. The overall dependence of the Russian economy on the oil is clear and self-evident, therefore, it is not surprising that the biggest and most influential companies are ones that belong to oil and extractive industry (Hutt 2016). According to RBC, a Russian business web-portal and magazine, there are seven oil and gas companies among the top 20 largest (in terms of revenue) companies of Russia, while top 3 companies of this ranking are Gazprom, Lukoil, and Rosneft respectively (RBC 2017).

The main constituents of dependence of Nenets and Komi Republic's authorities on the oil companies are the budget revenues coming from such companies and social partnership agreements. Both subjects have already been thoroughly described in previous chapters, thus from this perspective it is interesting to include for comparison a case of the Republic of Tatarstan, another oil-rich region of Russia.

As Valentina Semyashkina pointed out, a situation with adverse effects of oil extraction there is quite different. According to her, the region does not experience a problem of oil spills of the same scale as Komi does and the overall attitude of Tatneft, the main oil company operating there, towards environment it conducts its operations in is indeed different due to two reasons: 1) affiliation of the company – Tatneft is regarded as Tatar national oil company, 30.45 % of the company's shares are owned by the Central Depository of the Republic of Tatarstan, the Chairman of the Board of Directors is the Rustam Minnikhanov, the President of Tatarstan; 2) the region is more intensely populated – population of Tatarstan is more than four times bigger than population of Komi, population density is around 57 persons / sq.km. comparing with 2.1

persons / sq. km in Komi (Tatneft 2017). The second factor also affects and determines awareness of local population about pollution caused by the extractive companies and readiness to react. Thus, bigger amount of tax payments staying in the region, regional affiliation of Tatneft, and people being much more interconnected among themselves altogether attribute to more socially responsible activities of the oil companies operating in Tatarstan. In comparison, in much more remote and more scarcely populated localities as, for example, West Siberian regions, where several different indigenous ethnic groups reside, the situation with oil spills and other repercussions of oil production resembles one in the Komi Republic.

While discussing the relationship between public organizations and oil companies, primarily Lukoil-Komi, the biggest oil company operating in the Komi Republic, was addressed. Both representatives of the Save the Pechora Committee and Izvatas have agreed that relations between Lukoil Komi and public organizations are and have been traditionally quite uneasy, especially between Lukoil and Save the Pechora Committee. The main claim the organization tries to make is unwillingness and inability of regional and central board of Lukoil to understand the problems of local population.

A: “They are constantly talking about that, let us, we will renovate the school, let us, we will build a kindergarten here in Krasnobor and so on. They do not understand that people are unsatisfied with the fact that they are building and operating without any accordance with local people. And what's more, they're constantly working so dirtily that destruction of a traditional human habitat is constantly taking place. And they do not understand it. I do not know why. I have different thoughts, well, maybe, because they are urban [laughing]” (Valentina Semyashkina, author's interview).

As in the case of regional and local authorities, exact people managing the company matter a lot. During the term of already mentioned Pyotr Oboronkov, the former Director General of Lukoil subdivision in Komi, the public organizations and the company's administration had rather tense relations due to the unbending stances adopted by both of the sides. And even though, the current relations are far from being mutually beneficial, their previous state can be characterized as much worse. The change in the relationship, which happened with appointment of Aleksandr Leyfrid, who is at the same time the Vice-President of entire Lukoil corporation, as a new Director General, was specifically outlined by Nikolai Rochev.

A: <...> he [Aleksandr Leyfrid] has also brought new people who now work with public, and after it the dialogue has begun to be established. It has been quite adequate, they are adequate people, who are definitely interested in this dialogue in order not to spoil their reputation. (Nikolai Rochev, author's interview).

As Rochev has concluded this appointment and change of managers of Lukoil Komi have been contributing to improvement of the relations between interregional public movement and Lukoil Komi in the last two years.

The aspect that seemed to be distinctive in relationship of Lukoil Komi with Izvatas and relationship of Lukoil Komi and the Save the Pechora Committee is financial support offered by the oil company. According to Valentina Semyskhina, the oil company has tried to offer financial support to the organization several times, but the Save the Pechora Committee tries “not to play such games” (author’s interview, 2016). At the same time, she outlined that the Committee does not reject to meet with the representatives of Lukoil and discuss the issues, rather it aims at establishing a constructive dialogue. But, as she also pointed out, “they [Lukoil Komi] see constructive in one kind of things, and we, I believe so, in others” (ibid.).

As for Izvatas, despite its strong position on the issue of environmental protection and land use and governance, it is interesting to mention that the movement was the first of its kind that signed a social partnership agreement with Lukoil Komi. Within framework of such agreements, among other things the oil company sponsors school pupils’ summer trips to a seaside, provide grants for cultural and social initiatives, as well as invest in youth education. At the same time judging by the activities of Izvatas and interview with Nikolai Rochev, its Chairman, that support does not affect the overall attitude of the public organization, as well as local people, to the repercussions of oil extraction in the Republic of Komi. However, when it comes to the movement’s branches in other regions where Izhma Komi reside, i.e. in Murmansk oblast, Yamalo-Nenets, Nenets, and Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrugs, there the movement has a different strategy. They do not intervene into the inner politics of these regions, neither do they openly confront oil companies. According to Nikolai Rochev, there “their main task is preservation of culture and language”.

In terms of the ways the public organizations may influence the decisions made by Lukoil Komi, such form as public hearings was specifically outlined. The public hearings are organized, for instance, in case of drilling of new wells; a project of drilling is prepared and discussed it with the representatives of local authorities, local population and public organizations. During such hearings the public organizations, as well as local residents, have a right to check all the documents, ask questions, demand for clarification of unclear information, propose the project amendments, as well as count the hearings as not having taken place or reject implementation of a project in case it does not satisfy them. Therefore, the public hearings are considered to be

a very important element of public control²⁵. According to the recommendations on conducting the public hearings, “conducting public hearings is possible on any project affecting the interests of society, and is mandatory in cases where the state environmental impact assessment of the proposed business project is required” (Silver Taiga 2004).

Overall, both public organizations from the Komi Republic have emphasized that they are ready to cooperate with oil companies, whenever they, particularly, Lukoil Komi, would be able to hear the public opinion, take it into account, and consider environment and local population while implementing any of their activities.

As for the Union of reindeer herders, according to Evgeniya Nosova, a representative of the organization, combatting the oil spills within the framework of other activities linked to environmental protection occupies up to 40 % of the Union’s activities. The organization regards fighting with the repercussions of operation of the oil companies and oil spills to be a part of the measures related to the protection of reindeer pastures and territories of traditional natural resources use. The activities that the Union implements include monitoring and detection of the places of accidents and destruction of territories of traditional natural resources use, measuring the affected areas, calculation of the damages and identification of those responsible for the violations. However, in comparison to Izvatas and Save the Pechora Committee, information on the cases of the Union’s actual engagement with oil companies available in open sources is indeed limited. Unfortunately, the Union of reindeer herders was not able to provide sufficient and detailed information on a matter of its relationship (confrontation / cooperation) with oil companies. The only responses, which were possible to be gained, describe the Union’s criticism of the Russian legislation and mutual agreements with the oil companies. Thus the Union regards Russian environmental and criminal legislation to be weak and unsound because of groundlessly small size of the penalties for committing the crimes against environment and ecology (the fact of which is also supported by Russian scholars²⁶). Besides, Nosova has mentioned that cooperation with the oil companies is processed only within the framework of the mutual agreements. We can only speculate here, but it is still possible to assume that this fact, together with overall unwillingness of the organization to provide decent answers to the questions that concern its relationship with authorities and oil companies, may potentially result in the absence of any further clarification of the discussed theme. It is important to mention here that overall the higher scale of concern of the indigenous communities and their organizations

²⁵ The same was emphasized by Stammmler and Ivanova (2016b, 1226).

²⁶ See more: Churkin, 2013, Sverdyukov, 2014. Besides, it is important to mention that according to Russian criminal law legal bodies are not recognized as eligible subject of a crime, and therefore cannot be accused and punished for committing the crimes listed in the Criminal Code.

in the Komi Republic in comparison to the NAO has also been reported in other researches (Loe et al. 2017, 317) The mentioned mutual agreements with the oil companies are of the same character as one signed by the Lukoil and Izvatas and aims at the financial support of the public organization's operation and activities by the oil company. Moreover, the cooperation agreements are also signed by the oil companies, namely Lukoil-Komi, Rosneft, and Bashneft, and the Okrug's authorities (The Pomor Centre of Public Policy 2011).

6.2.3 Cooperation with other public environmental and social organizations of indigenous and native peoples

All three interviewed organizations stressed the importance of networking and establishment of cooperation between organization active in the field of indigenous issues. Indeed, as Nikolai Rochev accentuates it, in order to be consistent and productive, it is vital to bring the public organizations together and define the common problems and strategies to solve them, and then that discuss such solutions collectively with extractive companies and regional authorities.

The case of the Komi Republic may serve as an example how such cooperation should be established. As it was already mentioned, both Izvatas and the Save the Pechora Committee work jointly on the projects dedicated to the environmental and connected with them social problems of Izhma Komi communities in the Republic. At the same time, both organizations stay independent in the stances they take on a particular issue: for example, when in April 2016 oil was founded floating in the Ukhta River, the Save the Pechora Committee was acting much more quickly and openly, calling for investigation, while Izvatas took more neutral position and was waiting for an official statement to be published (Nikolai Rochev, author's interview). Nevertheless, when it comes to pleas to authorities or organizing campaigns or protests the organizations usually cooperate on such matters.

Among other environmental organizations that are engaged in the debates over oil spills Semyashkina and Rochev noted Ecologists of Komi, and Greenpeace Russia. The role of Greenpeace Russia was specifically outlined by both interviewees due to the several reasons: firstly, Greenpeace Russia works closely with both Izvatas and Save the Pechora Committee and actively supports, promotes, and participates in the ecological campaigns organized by two bodies; secondly, being known world-widely Greenpeace is indeed significant when it comes to spreading information about the current situation on oil spills and overall pollution; thirdly, Greenpeace Russia supports (also financially) scientific research on the problem of pollution caused by extractive industry; finally, serving as a communication channel Greenpeace Russia

provides a valuable opportunity to reach the federal and regional authorities, oil companies, as well as experts, professionals, and other activists from all around Russia and abroad.

It is also important to recall that Izvatas is a member of RAIPON, the Russian Association of Indigenous Small-numbered Peoples of the North, even though Izhma Komi themselves are not recognized as indigenous small-numbered people. RAIPON is regarded as the most influential umbrella public organization that unites indigenous people of the North, Siberia and Far East of Russia that is eligible to address indigenous problems to higher echelons of regional and federal authorities. As Nikolai Rochev mentioned, Izvatas tries to use all potential membership in RAIPON may give (Nikolai Rochev, author's interview). Besides, it is interesting to note that Izvatas uses its status in RAIPON also as affirmation of Izhma Komi people's belonging to indigenous peoples of Russia. Particularly, the organization exploits its status during the clashes with the extractive companies and regional and local authorities.

Among local and regional indigenous and native organizations working actively on the respective socio-environmental matters, only Izvatas was recognized. Nevertheless, it is important to recall that Izvatas is not a sole organization that is affiliated with one of the local ethnic groups. The same affiliation is possessed by Komi Voityr (a representative body of all Komi people²⁷), interregional public movement Rus Pechorskaya (representing Ust-Tsilyoma²⁸), and many other national and cultural autonomies and organizations, registered in the Republic of Komi. None the less, among them only Izvatas is equally active in environmental and socio-cultural fields, while others may not even have any reference to the ecological and environmental, as well as land and governance problems in their strategies and programmes. Here it is also important to mention that unwillingness of Komi Voityr to be involved in and act openly on the matter of pollution from the operations of the extractive companies was criticized by the representatives of both Izvatas and the Save the Pechora Committee primarily due to higher status and wider possibilities that Komi Voityr possesses. Particularly, the organizations address to the fact that Komi Voityr is the only public

²⁷ Komi Voityr is an interregional public movement that unites all Komi people, irrespective of their place of residence (nevertheless, the main activities of the movement concern primarily and almost exclusively only the Republic of Komi). The movement was established in the beginning of 1990s, while the first Conference of Komi people, the highest representative body of Komi Voityr, was held in January 1991 in Syktyvkar. The main objectives of the movement are promotion of ideas of civil society and development of self-government of the people, raising the level of legal awareness of the population, protection of the rights and freedoms of citizens, preservation and promotion of the Komi language, customs, traditional culture and natural resources use, strengthening ties with the Finno-Ugric countries and ethnic groups (Finnougoria 2017).

²⁸ Ethnonym of Ust-Tsilma people, who traditionally reside in the area of the Ust-Tsilma rayon located in the north-western part of the Republic of Komi sharing its southern border with Izhma rayon. Ust-Tsilyoma linguistically and ethnically represent one of the Russian dialectical groups.

organization in the Komi Republic that has a right to legislative initiative (Art. 75 of the Constitution of the Republic of Komi), but, in opinion of the representatives of Izvatas and the Save the Pechora Committee, does not use the whole potential such a right provides, specifically, do not pass an initiative related to indigenous and native lands governance.

In terms of interregional cooperation, especially with the actors from the neighbouring regions, the following movements and public organizations were named: Yasavey and the Union of reindeer herders (both from Nenets Autonomous Okrug), Yamal to Its Descendants from Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Yugra Salvation from Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug. An interesting remark was made during the conversation with Valentina Semyashkina about the socio-ecological organizations operating in the other regions of Russia (particularly in Western Siberia), which also face oil spills and where indigenous and native peoples reside: according to her, while there are “pure” ecological organizations existing in these regions, i.e. those ones that combine solely ecologists and biologists, there is no any other example of an ecological organization that is at the same time socially minded and has established strong ties with local communities, which makes Save the Pechora Committee to be rather unique in this regard.

In regard to the Union of reindeer herders, among their partners they identify the Union of reindeer herders of Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, the Union of reindeer herders of Russia, the Association of Kola Saami, and Izvatas. Apart from it, the Union is also a member of Association of World Reindeer Herders, which unites reindeer herding organizations from all over the globe (Russia, Norway, Finland, Canada, the U.S., China, Mongolia, Scotland) and provides “reindeer herders a forum for contact and cooperation, which [contributes] to bring reindeer husbandry on the international agenda” (Reindeer Herding 2017). The Association potentially provides the Union an opportunity to speak up about the issues that reindeer herders of Nenets Autonomous Okrug face with. However, it was not outlined among the partners in the responses provided by the Union of reindeer herders, which is indeed surprising bearing in mind opportunities cooperation within framework may offer.

As it can be concluded from the features of aforementioned organizations, the Union tend to make contacts primarily with the public organizations focusing on reindeer herding. Although, the Union of reindeer herders does not aim at particular co-operation with indigenous organizations (Izvatas may be an exception here, but it at the same time defends the rights of those Izhma Komi who practice reindeer herding, which rather endorses the common rule, than disposes it), due to the fact that reindeer herding in Russia is mainly practices by indigenous and native peoples, it anyway is engaged in indigenous issues.

Evgeniya Nosova, a representative of the Union of reindeer herders of NAO, has outlined that co-operation with all organizations is stable and prosperous; more than that, the cooperation agreements are signed with some of the mentioned organizations. The strengths of mutual co-operation are constituted by the possibilities to interact and inform each other on various matters, while the weaknesses lay in unstable financial condition of the public organizations and impossibility to participate in the common projects (Evgeniya Nosova, author's questionnaire).

6.2.4 Local population involvement

While local population is not a direct focus of the present thesis, inclusion of analysis of, firstly, its involvement in the campaigns organized by the public organizations, and, secondly, its overall stance on the matter of adverse effects of oil extraction, is undoubtedly vital. Since all three organizations include people from indigenous and native ethnic groups, comparison between the positions Nenets and Izhma Komi people take is potentially interesting from the perspective of understanding of the outlined in previous subchapters differences between Izvatas (and the Save the Pechora Committee since it includes Izhma Komi people as well) and the Union of reindeer herders.

Starting from the case of the Komi Republic, the first thing that is needed to be marked is that only the residents of the districts mostly affected by oil production are concerned about oil spills. The residents of Usinsky, Ukhtinsky, and Izhemsky rayons are being the most active in this regard. As it was mentioned in one of the previous chapter, the same rayons are homes for the biggest groups of Izhma Komi people (except for Ukhtinsky rayon, which, nevertheless, lays in neighborhood of Izhemsky rayon). The outcomes of oil production are witnessed primarily by the inhabitants of rural areas, while in case of Ukhta, the second biggest city in the Republic, it is also possible to observe oil spills during the annual spring floods of the Ukhta River, the left tributary of the Izhma River, which is, in its turn, the left tributary of the Pechora River.

Rural character of Izhma Komi settlements defines overall unwillingness, inability and to some extent fear to be engaged in bureaucratic issues when it comes to organization of the protests or any other campaign. Therefore, the role of Izvatas and the Save the Pechora Committee and their administrative and organizational functions in this respect can hardly be underestimated. While local residents are generally willing to express their opinions and participate in protests and public hearings, Izvatas and the Save the Pechora Committee configure this desire into a formalized action.

As for the exact participants of the campaigns, both men and women are actively involved and presented in the protests and crusades. Nevertheless, Nikolai Rochev outlines that in some cases men protest more than women due to the fact that men are those who primarily witness the oil spills, for instance, while hunting, angling, and reindeer herding. The age of those local residents who take an active stance on the environmental issues differ a lot. Interestingly and representatively that a lot of young people participate not only in the certain crusades, but also engage in other activities of the organizations, which is undoubtedly positively perceived by both Izvatas and the Save the Pechora Committee. Among such are environmental campaigns and various conferences and other forms of educative activities. For instance, in summer 2015 the Save the Pechora Committee in cooperation with Greenpeace organized two-week summer school for the youth, students, and volunteers on environmental protection, and more precisely on usage of the GIS technologies in monitoring of ecological situation in the Pechora river basin. Apart from it, it was exactly the Committee that in 2005 brought the River Ribbon²⁹ campaign to the Republic of Komi, which five years later was supported by the Ministry of Environment and became an annual all-Republic event, attracting not only youth, but more recently even the entire organizations and companies. The last event I would like to mention is series of environmental and local history school conferences organized by the Save the Pechora Committee, Silver Taiga Foundation, Izvatas and Izhma local history museum for the school pupils of Izhemsky rayon. The proceedings of these conferences were published in the sourcebook “We are the children of Parma” in 2007; publication of the book was funded by Silver Taiga Foundation and Lukoil Komi (Semyashkina 2016; Semyashkina et al. 2007).

Interestingly that in comparison to the cases of Izhemsky and Usinsky rayons in the Republic of Komi, men in the Nenets Autonomous Okrug react to the problem of oil spills less intensively than women. As Evgeniya Nosova explains it, since oil industry is a workplace for a big part of male population in the Okrug, men, firstly, generally have less time for “extracurricular activities”, and secondly and more importantly, are afraid to lose such rare and valuable jobs, and thus decide to compromise their social consciousness in favor of employment and relative financial independence.

²⁹ The campaign was initially created by the Russian Rivers Network and aimed at de-littering of the rivers, promotion of environmentally friendly way of life, and spreading information about water pollution. The name of the campaign came from the blue cloth that was transported from one participating region to another. Each region attached to the ribbon their own parts of cloth with some information about the rivers and photos of people who had participated in a campaign (Russian Rivers Network; Semyashkina 2016).

While talking about the ethnic factor influencing the involvement of people into the protests and their overall stand on a matter of pollution caused by the extractive companies, both interviewees from Izvatas and the Save the Pechora Committee outlined the active role and attitudes of Izhma Komi people. They are recognized as particularly active in comparison to other ethnic groups and nationalities. The most prominent example of Izhma Komi activism was a demand to terminate the operation of Lukoil in Izhemsky rayon expressed in 2013 and caused by the series of “continuing violations of environmental legislation permitted by LLC Lukoil Komi and its contractors, as well as the permissive attitude of the district administration”, which eventually was not fulfilled (7x7 2014a).

From one point of view, greater engagement of Izhma Komi people into the environmental problems can be explained by the fact that they live exactly in those districts that are mostly affected by oil spills, e.g. Izhemsky and Usinsky, and thus may directly witness the repercussions of oil extraction and production. From the other point of view, such a prominent stand on a matter may be as well linked to the personal and collective traits that are known to be peculiar for Izvatas (Terebikhin & Shabaev 2012, 30-31, 35-37). More than that, knowledge and experience of traditional land and natural resources use developed by Izvatas, which has been already described in one of the previous chapters, also complement to the level of collective commitment. The distinctions between the ethnic groups residing in the same or close areas have been acknowledged in the process of comparison of social activism of the residents of two neighbouring districts, that are Izhemsky with Izvatas being overwhelming majority and Ust-Tsilemsky populated mostly by the Russians, precisely Ust-Tsililyoma.

A: [The level of local community involvement is] less, for example, in Ust-Tsilemsky rayon. <...> We, in the Committee, also have the representatives from Ust-Tsilma, but they somehow do not approve themselves.

Q: And why?

A: <...> well, first of all, Ust-Tsilyoma and Izvatas, they are completely different people. I do not want to compare, <...>, but, apparently, they [Ust-Tsilyoma] have a slightly different mentality. Here, as if they are a bit self-contained, yes. And Izvatas are more open and more social. (Valentina Semyashkina, author's interview).

Such an observation is also supported by the fact that even a body representing Ust-Tsilyoma, which is, namely, already mentioned Rus Pechorskaya, does not take any salient stance on ecological and environmental issues, but creates mostly only those projects and supports primarily those initiatives, which are related almost exclusively to culture, folklore, and language.

Another explanation can be drawn on the basis that oil extraction and production in Izhemsky rayon, the motherland of Izhma Komi people, was started only in the very end of 1990s, while in other oil-rich districts the oil and other natural resources extractive companies had been operating long before. A reindeer herder Pyotr Khozyainov, a resident of Izhemsky rayon, who has been engaged in reindeer herding for several decades both before big oil companies' entrance to Komi land and after it, outlines that scale of oil spills before and now differs dramatically and not in favor of environment (author's interview, 2017). Hence, local residents still remember time when there was no oil extraction in their rayon and, consequently, no pollution caused by it, and are more quick off the mark when it comes to protection of their rights to live in clean environment.

Both Nikolai Rochev and Valentina Semyashkina have asserted that financial support for the rural settlements provided by the oil companies within the framework of social partnership agreements seems not to influence local population's protest sentiment and its engagement in the activities and campaigns of the Save the Pechora Committee and Izvatas.

As for the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, in terms of ethnic origin, the Nenets who are engaged in traditional occupations, including reindeer herding, are the ones (possibly, the only ones) who react to the oil spills. Their motives are clear: usually, oil spills happen on the reindeer pastures and reindeer migration routes, thus, the reindeer herders together with their herds are forced to change the pastures and the routes. In terms of age of those among local population who pay more attention to oil spills, Evgeniya Nosova has noticed that "the older generation responds more keenly, because they live more "traditionally" (Evgeniya Nosova, author's questionnaire).

However, local population in Nenets Autonomous Okrug is still quite inert and sluggish in terms of reaction to the oil spills issue (ibid.). Indeed, even when searching the Internet, I have found almost no single example of a campaign or protest organized in Nenets Autonomous Okrug against the nature-endangering activities of the oil companies. At the same time, it says a lot not only about the level of local population's involvement into the discussed matter, but as well gives a hint about the readiness of the public organizations to publicly accuse and stand against the oil companies. However, as the representative of the Union of the reindeer herders of NAO suggests, it is exactly the public organizations that somehow react to the cases of oil spills, make the appeals and sue the oil companies to the local prosecutor's office, and participate in the work of various commissions. Nevertheless, it would be incorrect to consider local population as totally indifferent about environment they live in: the residents of the affected settlements inform the public organizations and the prosecutor's office about the

environmental changes, monitor and report the spills they have seen during angling and reindeer herding. Nevertheless, the exact number of such claims is still unclear due to lack of information available on-line and provided by the public organizations operating in the Okrug.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Implementation of a research on a timely and salient topic, which at the same time is quite delicate and sensible, can be and usually is simultaneously challenging and attractive. I assume I have a right to consider native and indigenous peoples' fight with repercussions of oil production to be a topic of this kind. Possibly, I have not achieved and fulfilled all the objectives I set in the beginning of the research process, however, I consider the difficulties I have had during it to be indeed illustrative and relevant while attempting to imagine an overall situation on the matter of indigenous peoples' rights and environmental protection of the territories of their traditional habitat, activities, and natural resources use.

Oil is spilled both in the Republic of Komi and Nenets Autonomous Okrug, while a big part of the cases of oil spills stay to be unreported and hidden. The repercussions of oil spills affect local communities enormously, but this influence is especially hazardous when it comes to indigenous and native peoples' settlements. These two sentences should be taken as axiomatic in order to continue presenting the findings of the conducted research.

The first research question was dedicated to the strategies of two ethnic groups in negotiation with oil companies, as well as the similarities and differences of the stances occupied by Izhma Komi and Nenets people on the issue of oil spills. Unfortunately, information provided by the Union of reindeer herders of Nenets Autonomous Okrug was not as sufficient and complete as one obtained during the interviews with the representatives of Izvatas and Save the Pechora Committee. However, even based on available data it is still possible to conclude that there are far more differences than similarities regarding two peoples' positions. Practicing the same traditional activities and residing in similar areas, Izhma Komi and Nenets people, at a general level, appear to behave differently on the environmental risks and problems. Izhma Komi seem to be more social-minded and ready to actively vindicate their rights, land, territory, and environment. Such case may be explained both by the fact that oil production on the lands of the Izhma Komi communities started relatively recently, thus the "pre-extraction" memories

are still strong among people, and overall more active and entrepreneurial character of Izhma Komi people outline during the interviews and previous researches. Another trend in relation to Izhma Komi is wider involvement of youth into various socio-environmental campaigns and activities of the public native and environmental organizations. In their turn, the Nenets people, being indigenous small-numbered people, have more legal instruments that allow them to actively influence the decisions made by the oil companies and authorities and to promote their rights, nevertheless, judging by the current situation in Nenets Autonomous Okrug these instruments are not employed as much and as properly as they could have been.

Overall, making a conclusion about the strategies employed by both organizations, according to Stammmler and Ivanova's classification, based on this and previously done researches it is possible to summarize that the Nenets indigenous organizations are prone to co-operation strategy, while the Izhma Komi representative organizations tend to confront the extractive industry. However, as was outlined by the representatives of Izvatas and the Save the Pechora Committee, they would be equally willing to cooperate with oil companies, once this opportunity will be available.

Transferring to the second research question, which is indeed has a lot of links, to the first one, it is firstly important to mention some of the key findings. Here I would like to outline overall openness of Save the Pechora Committee and Izvatas in a dialogue about their relations with oil companies, regional and municipal authorities, as well as about the obstacles and perspectives of such relations. Unfortunately, in its replies on this particular topic the Union of reindeer herders of Nenets Autonomous Okrug was not able to demonstrate the same level of transparency. This situation, in the aggregate with Yasavey's unwillingness to respond to the questionnaire, may allow us to consider the Nenets indigenous and public organizations to be quite reluctant to publicly discuss their affiliations and existing issues in communication with Nenets authorities and oil companies operating in the region. An interesting aspect worth to be mentioned is a fact that even though some of the Izvatas's activities are funded by Lukoil Komi, it does not circumscribe the organization from being consistent in its fight against oil spills caused by operation of exactly Lukoil Komi. It leads us to the following conclusions: firstly, being monetarily supported by an oil company does not necessarily equate to being silent and accommodative on the repercussions of the activities of such company, and secondly, despite all existing issues it is possible to establish cooperation and communication between oil companies and public organizations.

The biggest obstacles that do not let adequate and mutually beneficial communication to be improved are, firstly, mutual misunderstandings between oil companies and public

organizations, and secondly, inability of bigger number of public organizations, both environmental and indigenous, to establish the common strategy and develop the common position. The first observation supports the idea, which has already been brought up in the previous researches by Stammler and Wilson about importance of mutual recognition of indigenous communities and oil companies and undertaking the attempts to find the points of common interest. This way or another, the examples of Izvatas and Save the Pechora Committee justify that the public organizations are indeed the valuable and vital players in a dialogue with oil companies, environmental protection, and protection and promotion of indigenous and native peoples' rights and may indeed play to some extent a decisive role. Unfortunately, lack of information provided by the Union of reindeer herders does not allow me to make any precise conclusion in relation to the Nenets organization in this regard. Apparently, the main aspects that determine a level of involvement of such organizations are personal skills and abilities of their members of board and activists, their inclusion and interest in protection the indigenous and native peoples' rights, and their understanding of the scope of the existing issues and ways to resolve them. Moreover, personal relations and contacts between people in indigenous communities, extractive industries, and authorities in some cases are of invaluable help for building the constructive relations.

The thesis has started with introduction to the idea of territory and land and its importance for indigenous peoples. Comparing the cases of Nenets and Izhma Komi people and their representative organizations I may trace a telling aspect. While a little or almost nothing has been related to significance of a question of territory by the Nenets representative, Izvatas recognized it as the cornerstone of its fight against the adverse effects of oil production. What is especially important to understand that Izvatas relates to territory and land not only as something that can be polluted, but rather as a tool of recognition and positioning of Izhma Komi people. In their understanding land and territory is inseparable from the community and its collective and individual ways of life and activities it practices. Such perception leads to understanding of the environmental problems as not only dangerous for environment itself, but rather as threatening the essentials of Izma Komi people's lives. All in all, to be able to protect areas they live in, people need to perceive and recognize themselves as masters of these lands and territories. In its turn, such understanding and recognition should be supported by the set of legal instruments, which provide the grounds for the territorial and other claims, and which currently are quite limited for Izhma Komi. It might be worth to consider that granting a status of indigenous small-numbered people for Izhma Komi may improve this situation.

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APPENDICES

Appendix No. 1. Location of the Komi Republic and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug



Created with mapchart.net (the Komi Republic is marked in red, the Nenets Autonomous Okrug is marked in pink).

Appendix No. 2. Finno-ugric, samoyedic, and yukaghir peoples in Russia

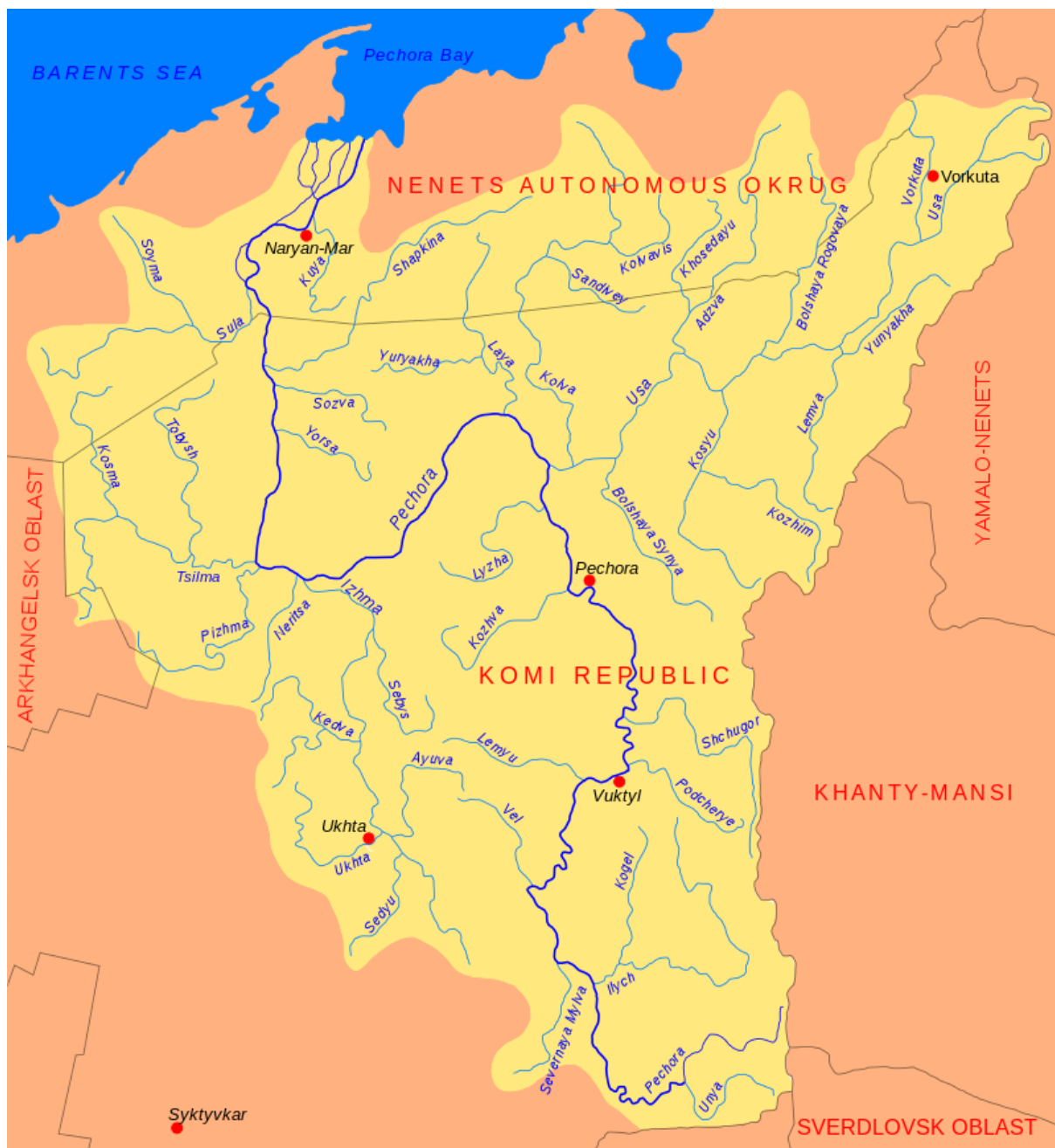


FINNO-UGRIC					SAMOYEDIC		YUKAGHIR	
FINNIC			UGRIC		Enets	5	Tundra	
A. Baltic-Finnic:	Veps	3	Udmurt	Yellow	Nenets	Yellow	Kolyma	Pink
Estonian	Votic	4	D. Mari	Light Green	Nganasan	Light Blue		
Finnish	B. Sami	Blue	E. Mordvin	Red	Selkup	Purple		
Ingrian	1	C. Permic:						
Karelian	2	Permyak						
Livonian	2	Komi						

Diagonal lines indicate sparsely populated areas

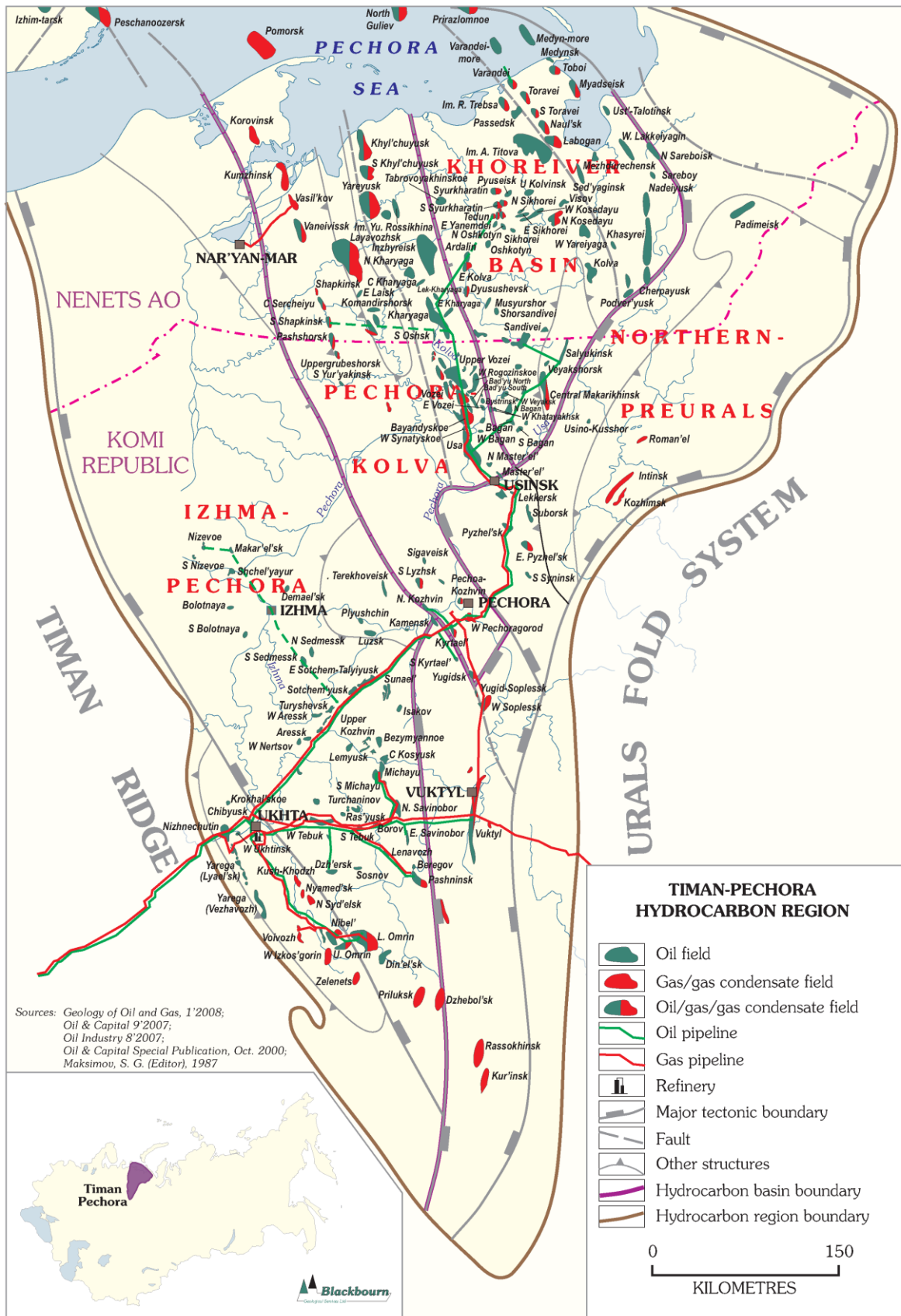
Source: <https://media1.britannica.com/eb-media/30/2030-004-41A16422.jpg> (The areas of the Komi Republic and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug inhabited by Komi and Nenets people are located within the blue block).

Appendix No. 3. The Pechora River basin



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pechora_River#/media/File:Pechora-en.svg

Appendix No. 4. The Timan-Pechora basin hydrocarbon province



Source: http://img-fotki.yandex.ru/get/5700/invngn.36/0_4e84f_bebacc5_orig

Appendix No. 5. The questionnaire sent to the Union of reindeer herders of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug (in English)

Unit 1. The activities of a public organization

1. What is the role that environmental agenda, and in particular, the fight against the oil spills, play in your organization's activities? What position do you take on the problem of oil spills?
2. What kind of activities have been carried out and are carried out in this field? What are their results?
3. Interaction between a public organization and oil companies:
 - a) What are the companies that are engaged in oil production and development of fields in Nenets Autonomous Okrug?
 - b) How do you position yourself in a dialogue with the oil companies, in particular, on the issue of oil spills? Is there understanding in the dialogue with the oil companies? If not, in your opinion, what are the reasons for confrontation?
 - c) Do the oil companies support the local community? If yes, in which manner? Does it influence local residents' perception of the oil companies and aftermath of their activities (e.g., residents are favorably disposed towards the company because of the support from its side)?
4. Interaction between a public organization and authorities:
 - a) Do local, regional or federal authorities support your organization, particularly, in terms of the oil spills issue? If yes, what kind of support they address? If not, why?
 - b) Do any differences exist in your relationship with the local and regional authorities?
 - c) What difficulties has your organization experienced while interacting with authorities?
5. Cooperation with other public and environmental (in NAO and neighboring regions):
 - a) Are there any other public and environmental organizations that deal with oil spills issues in your region and neighboring regions?
 - b) Whether cooperation established with such organizations or not?
 - c) How do you assess the results of such cooperation?
 - d) What are the strengths and weaknesses of such cooperation? What are the difficulties?

Concluding questions: How do you assess achievements of your organization in fight against oil spills? What are the main difficulties? What direction does the organization plan to follow in terms of fight against oil spills?

Unit II: Impact on the lives of the local community

1. What negative effects does oil production cause on the traditional way of life of local population? Is it changing? If yes, how?

2. What consequences do oil spills have on the places of residence of local population? Do these places change due to oil production? If yes, how?
3. In your opinion, does local population have any interest in oil spills issues?
4. What role does local population play in fight against the negative effects of oil production?
5. How do local people react to the problem of oil spills?
 - 6.1. Do people of different nationalities, who live in this area, express different opinions concerning oil spills? If yes, in your opinion, why?
 - 6.2. Do people of different ages, who live in this area, express different opinions concerning oil spills? If yes, in your opinion, why?
 - 6.3. Do people of different sexes, who live in this area, express different opinions concerning oil spills? If yes, in your opinion, why?
7. In your opinion, how fully and objectively the problems of oil spills are covered in local media?

Thank you very much for your time and answers!

Appendix No. 6. The original questionnaire sent to the Union of reindeer herders of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug (in Russian)

Блок I: работа общественной организации

1. Какое место занимает в деятельности Вашей организации экологическое направление, а в частности, борьба с нефтяными разливами? Какую позицию Вы занимаете по проблеме нефтеразливов?
2. Каким образом налажена работа в этом направлении? Какие мероприятия проводились и проводятся? Каковы их результаты?
3. Взаимодействие общественной организации и нефтяных компаний:
 - а) Какие компании ведут добычу нефти и разработку месторождений в Ненецком автономном округе?
 - б) Как Вы позиционируете себя в диалоге с нефтяными компаниями, в частности, по проблеме нефтеразливов? Есть ли понимание в диалоге с нефтяными компаниями? Если нет, то в чем Вы видите причины конфронтации?
 - в) Оказывает ли нефтяная компания поддержку местного сообщества? Если да, то каким образом? Влияет ли это на восприятие нефтяной компании и последствий ее деятельности местными жителями (например: жители начинают лучше относиться к компании из-за поддержки с ее стороны)?
4. Взаимодействие общественной организации и властных структур:
 - а) Оказывают ли властные структуры на местном, региональном и федеральном уровне Вам поддержку, в частности, в борьбе с нефтяными разливами? Если да, то в каком виде эта поддержка выражается? Если нет, то, как Вы думаете, почему?
 - б) Можно ли говорить о различии в Ваших отношениях с чиновниками местного и регионального уровня?
 - в) Какие сложности есть во взаимодействии общественной организации и властных структур?
5. Сотрудничество общественной организации с другими общественными и экологическими организациями (в НАО и соседних регионах):
 - а) Есть ли в Вашем регионе и соседнем регионе другие общественные и экологические организации, занимающиеся вопросами разливов нефти?
 - б) Налажена ли совместная работа с такими организациями?
 - в) Как Вы оцениваете результаты такого сотрудничества?
 - г) В чем Вы видите сильные и слабые стороны сотрудничества? В чем заключаются сложности?

Заключительные вопросы по блоку: Как Вы оцениваете достижения Вашей организации в борьбе с разливами нефти? В чем заключаются основные сложности? В каком направлении организация планирует двигаться дальше в плане борьбы с нефтяными разливами?

Блок II: влияние на жизнь местного сообщества

1. Какое влияние оказывают негативные последствия добычи нефти на традиционный уклад жизни местного населения? Меняется ли он? Если да, то каким образом?
2. Какие последствия оказывают нефтеразливы на места проживания местного населения? Меняются ли они из-за добычи нефти? Если да, то каким образом?
3. По Вашему мнению, интересуется ли местное население проблемы разливов нефти?
4. Какую роль играет местное население в борьбе с негативными последствиями добычи нефти?
5. Каким образом местные жители реагируют на проблему разливов нефти? В чем это выражается (акции, кампании и пр.)?
- 6.1. Различается ли отношение к разливам нефти представителей разных национальностей, живущих на данной территории? Если да, то, как Вы думаете, почему?
- 6.2. Различается ли отношение к разливам нефти представителей разных возрастных групп, живущих на данной территории? Если да, то, как Вы думаете, почему?
- 6.3. Различается ли отношение к разливам нефти мужчин и женщин, живущих на данной территории? Если да, то, как Вы думаете, почему?
7. По Вашему мнению, насколько полно и объективно освещаются проблемы разливов нефти в местных средствах массовой информации?

Спасибо большое за Ваше время и ответы!