

Monitoring of Oil Development in Traditional Indigenous Lands of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, Northwestern Russia

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Project summary

Intensive oil-and-gas development occurs under Arctic conditions in the Nenets Autonomous Okrug (NAO). Severe impacts occur, both on the environment and on the socio-economic situation of the indigenous peoples living in and of the land. The project aims at monitoring the situation and producing a GIS database, which documents activities and can be used to promote interests of traditional land users. The Association of Nenets People "Yasavey" is the major cooperation partner of the project, a fact that will ensure that local indigenous peoples' knowledge and needs are taken care of. Both natural and social scientific methods will be applied to acquire data on oil and gas development as well as traditional occupations, mainly reindeer herding. Data sources are published data, personal observations of indigenous representatives, questioning of local residents in selected areas of the NAO, photo documentation, inquiries at administration and oil companies, and satellite image survey. The GIS database will show the physical and ethno-geography of the NAO, as well as visible and reported impacts derived from hydrocarbon prospecting and production. Data will be presented as an interactive map to 1:1 mill., though more detailed in areas where the density of acquired data demands it. Map elements will be linked with descriptive, explanatory and interpreted data in text and image formats. Contained data will be discussed in environmental, socio-economic, anthropological and human-security-related contexts. For this purpose a working group of international experts on these topics is formed. The database will be posted on the Internet. All data will also be published in bilingual (English and Russian) reports. To make sure that data presentation complies with Russian law, Russian legal expertise is attached to the project. After cessation of the project the database will be transferred to a local server in the NAO. Yasavey will be trained in using and maintaining it.