



ANNOTATION

of the concept of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) project:

“Sustainable Development of Cities in Arctic Region through the Improvement of their Engineering and Transportation Infrastructure and Personnel Training for Good Urban Governance”

Developers of the project concept:

Arctic Public Academy of Sciences

FGUP “Russian State Scientific Research and Design Institute of Urbanistics”

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ANNOTATION OF THE CONCEPT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME (UN-HABITAT) PROJECT:

“Sustainable Development of Cities in Arctic Region through the Improvement of their Engineering and Transportation Infrastructure and Personnel Training for Good Urban Governance”

Project Justification

This project is focused on the implementation of the policy carried out within the framework of the UN-HABITAT programme for the years 2006-2007, Sub-programme I: “Housing and Sustainable Human Settlements Development”

The directive mandate of the Sub-programme I is supported by the following documents:

- a) Resolution of the Governing Council of UN Human Settlements Programme of April 6, 2005 No. 20/8 “Sustainable Development of Arctic Cities” which notes the difficult problems of human settlements development in the Far North and Arctic Region resulting from the severe climatic conditions in combination with the environmental pollution, decline of indigenous population and its growing vulnerability. The Resolution recognizes the need in the provision of adequate housing for the population of Arctic Region and sustainable development of human settlements in this region and requests the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT to render the necessary assistance in the promotion of international cooperation “North-North” with the aim to solve the problems of sustainable development of cities and other human settlements, to provide improved housing and infrastructure in the circumpolar zone of the globe and to create favourable living conditions for the indigenous population.
- b) Resolutions of the Governing Council of UN-HABITAT: 16/7 on the realization of human right to adequate housing; 18/11 – on strengthening the dialogue on the efficient decentralization and strengthening the local government bodies within the framework of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda; 19/3 – on the global campaigns on secure tenure and city governance; 19/4 – on cooperation between the UN Human Settlements Programme and UN Environment Programme; 19/2 – on decentralization and strengthening the local government bodies.

Project Actuality

The whole many-century history of the exploration and development of the Russian North shows that this territory has been traditionally the sphere of the national interests and safety of Russia having the strategic nationwide significance.

The “Concept of the National Safety of the Russian Federation” approved by the Decree of the RF President of January 1, 2000, No. 24 especially stresses the need in the development of the relevant mechanisms to support the vital activity and the economic development of the most crisis regions and districts of the Far North which is regarded as the priority task in the activity of the Ministry of Regional Development of the Russian Federation.

This role of the Arctic Region is attributed to the whole range of factors the most important of which are as follows:

- the great size of the arctic territories that cover more than 60% of the total area of the Russian Federation;
- rich natural resources including the strategic raw materials and first of all oil, gas, diamonds, gold, coal, ferrous metals, timber, etc.;
- availability of the Northern Sea Way and its infrastructure that in terms of its significance provides a unique transcontinental transportation corridor;
- a unique significance of Arctic Region as a gigantic natural reserve that makes an important contribution to the ecological balance of the whole continent;
- political significance of the region associated with its frontier location and enormous length of its frontier zone which concentrates the economic, political and other interests of other states;
- indigenous small in number populations living in the Arctic Region representing special ethnic groups that during the many-century history have made a great contribution to the development of human civilization and maintained their highly material and original spiritual culture;
- enormous resources and efforts made during many decades in the development of the North and sacrifices made to promote the region’s development.

Among the whole range of problems faced by the country during the period of radical political, economic and social reforms the problem of sustainable development of the Russian Arctic region has a special significance which could be attributed to a number of reasons the most important of which are as follows:

- enormous size and extreme natural and climatic conditions of the northern territories that considerably aggravate the solution of all development problems;

- extremely low sustainability of natural complexes to the man-induced impacts that gives rise to the whole range of ecological problems within this territory;
- resource-oriented development of the established economic complex of arctic areas having the great strategic significance;
- subsidized nature of socio-economic development of most northern regions;
- growing unemployment rates among the population of arctic regions;
- the need in the provision of the living conditions and the lifestyle for the indigenous small in number peoples of the North based on the preservation and development of their original culture and handicrafts as a material basis for their existence;
- specific structure and functioning of the government bodies in the northern territories.

Analysis shows that the Arctic Region still remains in the sphere of the national interests and safety of Russia in spite of the existing difficulties. Moreover, today the Arctic Region significance in the international sense has been growing which, in particular, is associated with the fact that in the recent years the Russian part of the Arctic Region has been in the focus of particular attention of many foreign states that try to realize their strategic interests at the background of the problems currently experienced by Russia as a whole and its Arctic region, in particular.

Therefore, it is so important for the state to provide a clearly-formulated policy for the arctic regions envisaging the state support to sustainable development of the North based on the advanced principles of economic development and solution of social tasks.

In this case it is necessary to state that at the present time Russia does not have a system of scientifically-grounded operational comprehensive assessment of processes going on in the socio-economic and ecological sphere with a special focus on the territorial aspect which, in particular, refers to the remote northern regions. It results in the lack of the necessary basis for the choice of the decision-making criteria to address the most acute problems. As a consequence, it leads to the unjustified decision-making on various aspects of territorial and human settlements development and the dispersion or the wrong formulation of priorities in the course of the allocation of the budgetary resources. Often the decisions are made to the detriment of safety and environmental interests.

Formulation of practical proposals to promote sustainable development of human settlements in the Far North and Arctic Region should be based inter alia on the objective monitoring data of sustainable development indicators developed for the northern regions with due regard to the UN-HABITAT experience in the field of the provision of safe and sustainable development of human settlements and territories. It will contribute to the objective decision making enabling to eliminate

or prevent the most pressing socio-economic and ecological situations and to initiate new international programmes and investment projects.

In the process of the dialogues initiated at the second World Urban Forum of UN-HABITAT that took place in Barcelona (Spain) in September 2004 the Millennium Development Goals have been given their further in-depth development in the application to the concrete urban problems, in particular, with regard to the urgent problems of city governance. In this respect, an important conclusion made on the basis of the outcomes of the World Urban Forum implies that the foundations for the sustainable development of the country are laid at the local level with the municipalities and first of all cities acting as the main engines of the growth.

It is especially important and acute for Russia in the light of the implementation of the Federal Law “On the General Organisational Principles of the Local Self-government in the Russian Federation”, No. 131-FZ of October 6, 2003. This Law, as compared with the previous one, envisages serious changes in the territorial, organizational and economic principles of the local self-government which should result in the assignment of the local government bodies with the principally new and wider powers and responsibilities for the provision of safe and sustainable socio-economic and territorial development and solution of local problems proceeding from the interests of population and with regard to the historic and other local traditions.

Implementation of this Law in the Far North and Arctic Region has a special significance taking into account their specific features including their natural-climatic, socio-economic, demographic, ethnic, ecological, etc. conditions.

As far as the logic of the on-going municipal reforms is in line with the democratic transformations of our society the success of these transformations will in many respects depend on the success of the municipal reform which is proved by the experience of Russia itself and other countries.

Project goal

The project goal is to formulate practical recommendations based on the principles of safe and sustainable development with regard to the UN-HABITAT experience and Millennium Development Goals of the UN in order to provide an adequate level and quality of life for the population and sustainable development of human settlements in the Arctic Region of Russia, to create favourable conditions for the efficient economic activity, rational use of natural resources, environment protection through the development of the advanced engineering and transportation infrastructure and the use of the modern system of local self-government in the application to the selected pilot model cities.

Project objectives

1. Based on the state policy to identify the development priorities to enabling safe and sustainable development of human settlements in the northern regions of Russia with a special focus on the improvement of the living conditions for the population with the simultaneous provision of the necessary balance in the use of natural resources to facilitate the reproduction of the natural environment and to create favourable conditions for the indigenous population of the region.
2. To formulate proposals for the initiation of a system of indicators to evaluate the safe and sustainable development of human settlements in the Far North of the Russian Federation.
3. To specify the key directions of sustainable socio-economic development of the model cities with due regard to the federal policy for the development of the North, modern requirements of the market economy and the need in the provision of the job opportunities for the population.
4. To prepare proposals to promote the development of the advanced engineering and transportation infrastructure in the model cities to be used as a basis for the creation of favourable living conditions for the population and efficient economic activity.
5. To improve the efficiency of the local self-government in the Far North and Arctic regions of the Russian Federation as a basis for the provision of safe and sustainable socio-economic development of the northern regions of the country with the selected model cities taken as examples.
6. To use the accumulated practical experience as a basis for the formulation of the “Recommendations to provide an adequate level and quality of life for the population and sustainable development of human settlements in Arctic Region of Russia, to create favourable conditions for the efficient economic activity, rational use of natural resources, improved efficiency of the reformed local self-government system”.

Timing and phasing of the project activities

Project duration – 2.5 years from the start of financing

1st year

1. Organizational activities, establishment of the working team, selection of pilot northern regions of Russia as the project participants, preparation of agreements. Presentation and launching of the project in the selected regions.
2. Collection, study and analysis of the initial information in the regions.
3. Mission trip of the working group to one of the countries in the circumpolar zone to study the experience in the provision of sustainable human settlements development under the specific conditions of the Far North, monitoring of the state of the northern territory to be used as a basis for the preparation of the given project.

4. Development of the socio-economic and ecological profile of the selected northern subjects of the Russian Federation.
5. Development of a system of comprehensive representative indicators for the northern territories of Russia and preparation of proposals for the initiation of a network of urban observatories in the Russian north.
6. Selection on a competitive basis of the pilot model cities participants of the project.
7. Preparation of the report “Analysis of the state and the problems of sustainable city development of Arctic Region of Russia with the pilot model cities taken as examples”.
8. Holding the international conference: “Millennium Development Goals and principles of safe and sustainable human settlements development in Arctic Region of Russia”.

2nd year

9. Identification of the key strategic directions of safe and sustainable socio-economic development of pilot model cities with due regard to the local conditions, regional, nationwide and international interests.
10. Comprehensive assessment of the local self-government structure in the selected pilot model cities with the aim to identify their internal potential for safe and sustainable socio-economic development.
11. Preparation of proposals to get the international support to the formulation of the joint investment programmes initiated on the basis of the outcomes of the formulated strategic directions of safe and sustainable socio-economic development of pilot model cities and justification of the sources of financing to make a provisional economic and financial checking of their feasibility in accordance with the accepted international standards.
12. Formulation of proposals to improve the relevant management mechanism for the development of the model cities including the proposals aimed at the promotion of inter-municipal cooperation (such as the associations, unions, etc.)
13. Formulation of proposals to initiate a system of personnel training and re-training for the municipal government bodies in the selected northern subjects of the Russian Federation through the identification of the requirements of municipal bodies for specialists of various profile directions and structuring the system of personnel training and re-training by the levels and branches of governance.

3rd year

14. Practical organization of a system of monitoring in the pilot model cities (installation of programmes and transfer of the recommendations to the network users).

15. Initiation of professional training for municipal governance in the pilot model cities in accordance with the personnel training and re-training programme formulated within the framework of this project.

16. Preparation of “Recommendations for the provision of an adequate level and quality of life for the population and sustainable human settlements development in Arctic Region of Russia, creation of favourable conditions for the efficient economic activity, rational use of natural resources, improved efficiency of the reformed system of the local self-government”

17. Preparation of the progress report on the project activities in the Russian and English languages.

18. Presentation of the project in pilot model cities, selected northern regions and the Ministry of Regional Development of the Russian Federation.

Expected project outcomes

1. For the first time in the national practice the principles of safe and sustainable development of cities and territories of the Far North and Arctic Region of Russia will be formulated that are based on the state policy of Russia for the development of the North and the relevant international experience of the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) and Millennium Development Goals.

2. The first practical steps will be made to form a system of monitoring of the safety and sustainability of the cities and territories of the Far North and Arctic Region of Russia. Upon the completion of the system the government bodies of the northern subjects of the Russian Federation and municipalities will be provided with the objective and timely information necessary to evaluate and prevent the development of dangerous trends and potentially arising problems within their territories and will have an opportunity to achieve sustainable development of human settlements and territories, to improve the quality of life of population through the improved efficiency of the resource use, reduction of the environment degradation and risks, improved governance of the region through strengthening the local potentials.

3. The northern Russian regions and cities will be given the practical and methodological assistance in the formation of the efficient local self-government system based on the principles of safe and sustainable development with due regard to the UN-HABITAT experience and MDGs.

4. Authorities of the selected regions and model cities will be given the relevant support to attract the national and international investments through the initiation, development and implementation of regional programmes and projects requiring cooperation of cities and neighbouring countries.

5. The northern subjects of the Russian Federation and municipalities will be given the recommendations for the provision of safety and sustainability in the development of human settlements and territories based on the practical experience of concrete cities and territories that was generalized in this project.

6. As a result of their involvement in the project the countries of the circumpolar zone will get concrete recommendations for the formulation and

implementation of international programmes to address the problems of mutual interest on the principles of cooperation.

7. UN-HABITAT will get the first module project for the provision of sustainable city development in Arctic Region which could help in the formulation of the UN-HABITAT policy in relation to the northern territories and cities.

Legislative and normative-legal base for the project performance:

- Decree of the Russian President: “Concept of the Transition of the Russian Federation to Sustainable Development” of April 1, 1996, No. 440.
- The Russian Law: “On the Foundations of State Regulation of Socio-economic Development of the North of the Russian Federation” of June 19, 1996, No. 78-FZ
- The Russian Law: “On the General Organisational Principles of Local Self-government in the Russian Federation” No. 131-FZ of October 6, 2003
- Urban Code of the Russian Federation of December 29, 2004 No. 190-FZ
- Resolution of the Presidium of the State Council of the Russian Federation of April 27-28, 2004
- Concept of the socio-economic development strategy of the Russian Federation regions, 2005, Minregion of the RF and others

The Programme should meet the international sustainable development principles and criteria formulated in the final document of the World Urban Forum in Rio-de-Janeiro in 1992 - Agenda 21, in the materials of the UN Conference on Human Settlements in Istanbul in 1996 (Habitat – II), Millennium Development Goals and the materials of the Arctic Council and Northern Forum.

Approximate project cost:

USD 500,000. It is assumed that the northern subjects of the Russian Federation involved in the project activities will make their financial inputs in the project.

BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT THE ARCTIC PUBLIC ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Arctic Public Academy of Sciences (APAS) established in St. Petersburg in 2003 considers the following activities as its main goals: implementation of scientific research contributing to the comprehensive and harmonious development of northern territories, improvement of the living conditions for their residents, assistance in the implementation of the scientific potential of St. Petersburg in the solution of problems of Arctic and North, assistance in the implementation of Arctic programmes and projects.

To achieve the aforementioned goals the following sections were formed within the framework of the Arctic Public Academy of Sciences:

- Geo-policy and Safety;
- Ecology and Nature-resource Use;
- Economy and Transportation;
- Culture, Arts and Tourism;
- Public Health Care and Healthy Life Style;
- Indigenous Populations of the North;
- Science and Education;
- Information Technologies;
- Artificial Living Environment;
- Young Scientists of the North.

Within the Academy's structure there is also an Agency for the Application of the Knowledge-intensive Technologies which activity is focused on the innovation projects and programmes.

The Arctic Public Academy of Sciences has established via its members the wide scientific links, in particular, with St. Petersburg scientific centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) and other RAS organizations, academies of foreign countries, Russian Academy of Natural Sciences (RANS), scientific public organizations of Russia and other countries, branch scientific research and design institutes of Russia and foreign countries, Administration of St. Petersburg, Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, international organizations and foundations.

The most important projects and programmes initiated by the Academy include:

- Scientific justification of proposals to be included in the Programme of the International Polar Year 2007/2008;
- Scientific justification of proposals to be included in the Programme of chairmanship of Russia at the Arctic Council;

- Scientific justification of the humanitarian movement “Intellectual Resources of the North in the Intellectual Potential of Russia”;
- Scientific support to the programme of the Northern Forum: “Response to the Emergency Situations under Conditions of Cold Climate”;
- Scientific support to the projects of the Northern Forum: “Geo-information System to Support the Development of Indigenous Peoples of the North”, “Development of Science and Education in the North”, “Development of the Life-supporting Technologies in the North”, etc.

The Academy intends to invite experts of practically all of the aforementioned sections to participate in the project to enable its necessary comprehensiveness, scientific depth and justification.

Requisites of the Arctic Public Academy of Sciences:

198188 St. Petersburg,

Vasi Alexeyeva str., 30-62

Tel. (812) 784-7518; fax: (812) 371-9257, tel/fax: (812) 234-4250

E-mail: vmitko@yandex.ru

www.ArcticAS.narod.ru

President of the Arctic Public Academy of Sciences:

Valery Bronislavovich MIT'KO

Chairman of St. Petersburg branch of Geo-policy and Safety Section of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences

Member of the Executive Committee of the Academy of the Northern Forum

Dr. of Technical Sciences

Professor

BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT THE FGUP “RUSSIAN STATE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND DESIGN INSTITUTE OF URBANISTICS”

Artificial Living Environment Section will perform the functions of the key project executive. It was formed on the base of the Russian State Scientific Research and Design Institute of Urbanistics established in 1929. Until the year 1991 it had the name of Leningrad State Institute of City Planning – “Lengiprogor”.

The Institute implements all types of urban planning, architectural and construction projects, as well as projects focused on the environment management, utilities provision of cities, restoration of cultural heritage.

Upon the decision of the Ministry of Regional Development of the Russian Federation and Federal Construction, Housing and Utilities Agency of January 22, 2005, No. 148-VYA/20 the Institute was appointed the head design organization responsible for the activities of urban design and planning profile in the Russian Federation.

The Institute has been actively involved in various projects carried out within the territory of Russia, in particular, in the development of the large-scale urban projects for its Northern region such as the regional planning projects and schemes for Yakutia and Buryatia, Magadan, Kamchatka, Sakhalin, Murmansk, Archangelsk, and other regions, master plans for the cities of Yakutsk, Ulan-Ude, Krasnoyarsk, Magadan, Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, Murmansk, Arkhangelsk, etc. In 1983-1987 the Institute implemented the large-scale nature conservation projects for the North including: the territorial comprehensive nature conservation scheme for the areas adjacent to the main pipelines in Western Siberia and Far North and the territorial comprehensive nature conservation scheme for the West Siberian oil and gas complex. The recent works include the projects for the northern cities of Murmansk, Naryan-Mar, Salekhard, Nyagan, Lensk, Tyumen, Tobolsk, etc. In 2006 a strategy for the economic development of Tyumen region and a territorial planning scheme for Arkhangelsk region were prepared.

The Institute has been involved in the large-scale international projects focused on the problems of urban planning and environment protection implemented in collaboration with the experts from Germany, Finland, Sweden, Canada.

The Institute’s staff members include academicians of the Russian and foreign academies, laureates of the state and international awards in the field of architecture and town planning, doctors and candidates of sciences.

Since the year 1998 the Institute has been involved in a number of projects implemented within the framework of the UN-HABITAT sub-programme: “Sustainable Human Settlements Development” with their main focus on the problems of sustainable development of Russian cities in accordance with the

principles declared in the Habitat Agenda and the Declaration of Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium adopted by the 25th special session of the UN General Assembly in June 2001. As a result of the aforementioned project activities it was possible to test the methodological approaches of UN-HABITAT for managing sustainable city development in their adaptation to the reality of Russian cities, to facilitate personnel training for the government bodies and deputies in the model cities on the basis of the training materials provided by UN-HABITAT, to prepare methodological guidelines to facilitate the transfer of the relevant experience of the model cities to other human settlements of the Russian Federation, to outline a number of actual programmes and proposals to strengthen further collaboration with the UN Human Settlements Programme.

Requisites of FGUP “RosNIPI of Urbanistics”:

196191, St. Petersburg,
Basseinaya str., 21
Tel. 370-1023, tel./fax: 370-1176
E-mail: vasch@peterstar.ru
www.urbanistika.ru

Director of the Institute:

Vladimir Alexandrovich SCHITINSKY
Advisor to the Russian Academy of Architecture and Construction Sciences
Corresponding Member of the German Academy of Urban Development and Land Planning
Professor of the International Academy of Architecture (Moscow branch)
Member of the Arctic Public Academy of Sciences, Chairman of the Section of “Artificial Living Environment”
Member of the Academy of Northern Forum
Honored Builder of Chuvash Republic
Laureate of the Award of the Ministry of Architecture and Construction of the Republic of Belarus named after V.A. Korol
Doctor of Architecture