

1. According to the observable indicators, no significant changes occurred in the state of the Lake Baikal in 2014, and the quality of its water remains stable and vastly exceeds the requirements for waters used for drinking purposes for decades. Baikal is the largest (23 thousand cubic km) freshwater object of the planet, the volume of which is equal to the seven-year runoff of all rivers in Russia and the three-year runoff of all the rivers of Eurasia.

Level of the lake. The annual water level in the Lake Baikal in 2014 was corresponded to extremely low water conditions.

As of 01/01/2014, the average water level of Lake Baikal was 456.55 m (TO), which is 0.09 m higher than in the previous year and 0.12 m above the average annual level (av. ann. 456.43 m).

The pre-flood decrease of the lake water level in 2014 was completed by April 12-13 at the mark of 456.12 m. The filling of the lake began in early terms - from April 14 (+1 cm). Further, due to a sharp drop in water content in mid-May, the filling stopped and continued from May 26 to September 9, reaching a maximum value of 456.57 m, which is the minimum level of filling after the adoption of the Russian Federation Government Resolution No. 234 dated March 26, 2001 "On the limit values of the Lake Baikal water level, when conducting of Economic and other activities" (hereinafter - Resolution No. 234). The water level decrease in Lake Baikal began on September 10, and the level had dropped to 456.15 m by the end of the year, which is 0.40 m lower than last year and 0.28 m below the mean annual values.

In 2014, there were no disturbances of Lake Baikal water levels established by Resolution No. 234. In the period from 1999 to 2012, the water levels of Lake Baikal were maintained within the established limits of 456.00 - 457.00 m. The levels close to the minimum limit values were observed in 2001 (456.01 m), in 2003 (456.02 m), and in 2008 (456.05 m).

The levels close to the maximum limit values were observed in 2001 (456.94 m), in 2004 (456.92 m), and in 2008 (456.93 m).

In 2014, there were preconditions for a disturbance of the lower boundary of the Lake Baikal water level established by Resolution No. 234 in the spring of 2015, due to the scarcity of water resources and the need to provide household and drinking water supply in the lower reaches of the Irkutsk HPP in winter.

The Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 97 dated 04/02/2015 "On the Limit values of the water level in Lake Baikal, when conducting economic and other activities during the autumn-winter period in 2014-2015" permitted the use of Lake Baikal water resources below the established minimum water level in the volume providing economic and other activities of the population and economic objects, with the subsequent restoration of the level regime of Lake Baikal during the flood in 2015.

The surface layer and the water column in 2014 were observed by the Irkutsk State Hydrometeorological Service of Roshydromet in June, March and September:

- on the Southern Baikal - in the area of sewage water impact of the Baikalsk Sewage treatment facilities (STF);
- in the area of the ports of Southern Baikal (Bolshoye Goloustnoye, Kultuk, Baikal and Vydrino);
- in the region of the riverhead of the Angara;
- in the area of the Selenga shallow water;
- in the area of Barguzinsky Bay;
- on the North Baikal - in the area of influence of the BAM;
- at background deep-water stations of the reference section, which runs along Lake Baikal along its central part.

The decrease in the volume of waste water discharge of Baikal self-contained paper mill by 91% in 2014 compared to 2013 contributed to the improvement of the water quality of Lake Baikal in the control area located 100 m from the depth dispersing outlet of the waste water of the Baikal pulp and paper mill.

In 2014, at the river head of the river Angara and in the area of Barguzinsky Bay the lake's water in chemical composition corresponded to the data of the background section. In the ports of Southern Baikal, since 2013, the content of biogenic compounds has increased.

The anthropogenic load on Lake Baikal decreased in the area of influence of the BAM route in 2014 compared to previous years of observations.

An increase in the maximum concentrations of total phosphorus is observed in the region of the river Selenga, r. Upper Angara and city of Severobaikalsk, including on the background verticals of the longitudinal section located in this part of the lake.

Bottom sediments. Monitoring of groundwater and bottom sediments on hydrochemical and geochemical indicators performed in 2014 in the area of discharge of sewage from the Baikalsk STS, when compared with the results of observations of previous years, indicates a decrease in anthropogenic load. At the same time, bottom sediments in this region are characterized as highly contaminated, which is due to the increased content of polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) and benz(a)pyrene in them. The size of the zone of pollution of groundwater and bottom sediments at depths of up to 350 m in 2014 was 5.1 km² (in 2013 - 6.2 km², in 2012 - 5.5 km², in 2011 - 5.5 km², in 2010 - 4.3 sq. km, in 2008 - 5.2 sq. km).

In the area of influence of the BAM route, no significant changes were observed in the state of bottom sediments and groundwater in 2014 compared to previous years. The zone of the greatest pollution is confined to the northwestern part of the surveyed territory. In terms of PAH content, bottom sediments in this area are characterized as moderately polluted.

In the Selenga shallow water area in 2014, the values of indicators of hydrochemical and geochemical control of groundwater and bottom sediments did not exceed the mean long-term values. Bottom sediments on the Selenga shallow water correspond to moderately polluted, only in terms of the amount of PAHs.

Ichthyofauna and seal population. A decrease in the total biomass of all omul morpho groups from 20.5-26.4 thousand tons (1982-2005) to 16.0-21.4 thousand tons in 2006-2011 is noted. In 2014, the ichthyomass of omul was determined in 16.0 thousand tons (in 2013 - 16.6 thousand tons). During the observation period (1982-2014), the ichthyomass of omul was varied from 16.0 to 26.4 thousand tons. In 2014, the total number of Baikal omul producers that entered the spawning rivers was 2.7 million specimens, which is almost 1.5 times lower than the average annual level of 4.2 million specimens. The main reason for the sharp decline in the spawning herd of omul is the general decrease in the stocks of this morpho group, as well as the illegal catch of pre-spawning gatherings in the summer. The decrease in the stocks of omul in 2006-2014 compared with the indicators of 1982-2005 causes concern among fisheries specialists. The total allowable catches of the omul for 2015 is set at 1,500 tons (the approved TACs amount to 1,750 tons in 2014 and 1,800 tons in 2013).

According to official data, all users of aquatic bioresources caught 840 tons of omul in total in Lake Baikal and its tributaries in 2014. The actual catch of the omul, taking into account the expert assessment of the unaccounted catch, was higher than the statistically approved TAC value. So, 45% of the catch of omul was illegal (2013 - 39%, 2012 - 37%) in 2014. Reduction of the volumes of illegal catch can be expected only with the strengthening of control over the catch and improvement of the social and economic situation in the region. Estimating the dynamics of omul catch volumes over the past 10 years, one should note the increase in official omul catch in recent years, following the adoption of new Fishing Rules for the Baikal fishery basin (Order No. 283 of the Federal Fishery Agency dated 07/04/2009) in 2009.

The total population of the Baikal seal increased by 6.2 thousand in 2014 (114.4 thousand heads) compared to 2013 (108.2 thousand heads). It still remains at the high levels for the last years. According to official statistics, 547 seals were produced in total in 2014. Given the illegal production, the caught amounted to 950-1,150 heads and did not have a negative impact on the population.

The rivers flowing into Baikal. The hydrochemical monitoring by organizations of the Irkutsk and Transbaikalian Territorial Administration for Hydrometeorological and Environmental Monitoring of Roshydromet was carried out on 33 rivers flowing into Lake Baikal and 16 tributaries of the first and second order flowing into the river Selenga. In 48 controlled rivers, 483 water samples were taken (in 2013 - 482 samples).

In 2014 there was a significant decrease in the total water flow of the five largest rivers of the Lake Baikal basin by 22%. The flow of the Selenga River decreased by 33%, the river Turka - by 16%. The flow of the Barguzin

River has not changed significantly. The flow of the Upper Angara and Tyia rivers increased by 13%, and by 20%, respectively.

The flow of pollutants into the lake from the five most studied rivers (Selenga, Barguzin, Turka, Upper Angara, Tyia) decreased in proportion to the runoff and increased only in copper by 15% in 2014 compared to 2013. The pollution of the lake significantly decreased: with suspended solids - by 22%, dissolved minerals - by 24%, tar and asphaltene - by 43%, hard oxidized organic matter - by 40%, zinc compounds - by 32%, and volatile phenols - by 16%. The pollution with petroleum products and surfactants practically did not change.

The river Selenga remains the main supplier of controlled substances to the lake. The contribution of the Selenga River to the receipt of various pollutants was from 75% (suspended substances) to 36% (copper compounds) from the sum of the supply of these substances with the water of the rivers Selenga, Barguzin, Turka, Upper Angara and Tyia. In general, the results of the hydrochemical control of the tributaries of Lake Baikal in 2014 showed that the influence of the river Selenga on the lake within the central ecological zone of BNT decreased for all indicators, except for synthetic surface active substances and volatile phenols.

According to observations in 2014, organochlorine pesticides (isomers of HCCH, DDT, DDE and DDD) were not detected in the water of the tributaries of the Selenga, Upper Angara, Tyia, Barguzin, Turka, and Maximih rivers in the central ecological zone of BNT.

The groundwater. There were no significant changes in the underground hydrosphere of the Baikal natural territory in 2014 compared to 2013.

The most significant object of pollution of groundwater that threatens the Baikal waters is the sludge accumulators of the Baikals pulp and paper mill. The dome of contaminated groundwater is preserved with a high content of pollutants specific for the pulp and paper industry and the general mineralization of groundwater. The intercepting water intake stopped working in connection with the cessation of production activities of the plant on October 15, 2013.

In the buffer ecological zone of BNT, the maximum anthropogenic load is experienced by groundwater in the basin of the river. Selenga. The main pollutants are the Selenginsk pulp and paper mill, the enterprises of the cities of Ulan-Ude and Gusinozersk, as well as the Dzhidinsky tungsten-molybdenum plant that has not been working since 1997.

Endogenous geological processes The activity of dangerous endogenous geological processes was at a low level in the Baikal region in 2014. This year was slightly more saturated in comparison with the previous one.

For the earthquake forecast in the Baikal region, monitoring of seismic activity, monitoring of modern tectonic movements by means of GPS-geodesy, monitoring of hydro-geo-deformation (HGD) gas hydrochemical (GHC) and geophysical (EIMPZ) fields was carried out. The existing system of monitoring of dangerous endogenous processes needs to be improved and developed.

Endogenous geological processes The exogenous geological processes had the greatest negative impact on the settlements located in the Kabansky and Barguzinsky districts of the Republic of Buryatia in 2014. The greatest damage was caused by ice and cryogenic swelling of soils.

The network of sites currently existing in BNN for observation of hazardous exogenous geological processes is not sufficient. The results of the performed observations give only fragmentary data on the regime of dangerous exogenous processes in individual territories. In order to obtain more complete data necessary to implement a reliable forecast of the development of dangerous exogenous geological processes throughout the entire area of BNT, the number of observation sites should be increased substantially.

Mineral resources and subsoil use. The volume of subsoil use in the Baikal natural area in 2014 remained practically unchanged. 4 licenses were issued (2 in the Republic of Buryatia, 2 in the Trans-Baikal Territory), and 3 licenses were revoked in the Irkutsk Region within within the BNT in 2014.

The influence of minerals developed or developed in the past on the natural environment continues to be significant. The Dzhidinsky tungsten-molybdenum plant in the Zakamensky district of the Republic of Buryatia continues to pollute the river Modonkul flowing into the river Jida.

There are no systematic observations of the impact on the natural environment of coal mines in the vicinity of Gusinoozersk, where, after the cessation of the mine dewatering, the recovery of the depression funnel may proceed, and the possibility of the development of a flooding process in the built-up area can not be excluded. It is necessary to create an observation monitoring network to assess changes in the state of groundwater and exogenous geological processes in this area, control the safety of surface and underground water intakes for domestic and drinking water supply. Similar problems exist in the zone of influence of the Tugnui coal mine (Petrovsk-Zabaikalsky district of the Trans-Baikal Territory).

L a n d s . During 2014 there was a slight redistribution of land between categories. The changes affected all categories of land: lands of settlements (an increase by 4.0%), reserve (a decrease by 0.6%), agricultural purpose (a decrease of 0.1%), industry (a decrease of 0.06%), water fund (a decrease by 0.005%), forest fund (a decrease by 0.004%) and specially protected areas (a decrease by 0.002%). Most of the changes occurred due to the inclusion of lands of the reserve and agricultural purposes in the land settlements.

F o r e s t s . The area covered by forest vegetation at the BNT increased by 22 thousand hectares (by 0.09%) and amounted to 25,270.5 thousand hectares. In the Trans-Baikal Territory, the area increased by 0.13%, in the Republic of Buryatia - by 0.15%. In the Irkutsk region, the area decreased by 0.02%.

The estimated felling area of mature, over-mature forest vegetation increased by 0.03% and amounted to 15,881.0 thousand m³. In 2014, the volume of felling of mature, over-mature forest vegetations amounted to 4,271.7 thousand meters in BNT and increased by 14% compared to 2013. The volume of fellings increased by 19% in the Irkutsk region, and by 12% in the Republic of Buryatia. The volume decreased by 3% in the Trans-Baikal Territory.

The volume of improvement cutting increased in comparison with 2013 by 8% and amounted to 27.7 thousand hectares. The increase was by 17% in the Trans-Baikal Territory, in the Irkutsk region - 16%, in the Republic of Buryatia - 7%. The sanitary and health measures were carried out on an area of 11.4 thousand hectares (13.98 thousand hectares in 2013).

In 2014, the number of fires increased by 2.1 times in comparison with 2013, and amounted to 2 383 fires. The area covered by fires, compared with 2013, increased by 5.2 times and amounted to 173.46 thousand hectares. The area covered by fires has increased by 3% in comparison with 2012.

C l i m a t i c c o n d i t i o n s . In 2014, the average annual air temperature at the BNT exceeded perennial values by 1-2 °C due to positive temperature anomalies, which were noted for most of the year. In June-August, the average monthly air temperature was about 1-2 °C in most of the territory (on the coast of Lake Baikal at 1-4 °C) above the multi-year values. During the summer period there were long periods of hot dry weather, when the maximum air temperature rose to 25-34 °C.

The combination of abnormally warm years with a long low-water period may be one of the main reasons for the active reproduction of green and blue-green algae. This issue requires further study.

2. In 2014, the anthropogenic impacts on the BNT environment were as follows:

- e m i s s i o n s to the atmosphere - 411,8 thousand tons (456,4 thousand tons in 2013, 483,7 thousand tons in 2012). In the past three years, the amount of emissions from stationary sources in the BNT has stabilized. In 2014, extremely high air pollution was not recorded. The cities of Irkutsk, Ulan-Ude, Petrovsk-Zabaikalsky and the village of Selenginsk continue to remain in the priority list of cities with a very high level of atmospheric air pollution. In 2014, the level of atmospheric pollution is estimated as "very high" for the first time in the city of Shelekhov. The pollution level is high in the cities of Cheremkhovo and Usolye-Siberian, and increased in the city of Angarsk. As in the previous year, in 2014, the level of atmospheric air pollution in the CEZ of the BNT - cities of Baikalsk, Slyudyanka, villages Listvyanka and Kultuk - was characterized as low. Atmospheric pollution in the industrial centers of the ecological zone of atmospheric influence of the BNT continues to remain high;

- d i s c h a r g e s o f s e w a g e in the central and buffer ecological zones of the BNT - 445.5 million m³ (510.6 million m³ in 2013, 461.5 million m³ in 2012, 400.5 million m³ in 2011, and 422.7 million m³ in 2010). The enterprises of the Republic of Buryatia and STF of Baikalsk formed 99.4% of the volume of wastewater

discharges in 2014. Volumes of discharges into the CEZ of the BNT decreased by 83-84% due to the closure of the Baikalsk Pulp and Paper Mill in 2013;

- the formation of production and consumption wastes in the central and buffer ecological zones of the BNT - 104.3 million tons (110.07 million tons in 2013, 83.5 million tons in 2012, 70.4 million tons in 2011, 33.1 million tons in 2010). The amount of waste generated decreased mainly due to the reduction of the amount of overburden and coal production by JSC "Tugnuiskiy razrez", which is located in the area of Mukhorshibirsky district of Buriatia and Petrovsk-Zabaykalskiy district of the Transbaikalian krai.

Area of the Baikalsk pulp and Paper Mill The Russian Government decided to close the JSC "Baikalsk Pulp and Paper Mill" in 2013. Starting from September 14, 2013, the mill operated only socially important facilities of the heating plant.

Since June 9, 2014, the facilities of the heating plant of the mill were transferred to the ownership of the Baikalsk municipality (Baikalsk city) of the Slyudyanka district. In 2014, the nature of air emissions was due to the operation of power boilers of the heating plant and motor transport. After the shutdown of the Baikalsk Pulp and Paper Mill, main environmental problem is the elimination of waste, recultivation of the sludge collectors cards, sanitation of the industrial site and liquidation of the contaminated groundwater dome.

Starting from 01/12/2013, JSC "BPPM" ceased to discharge waste water into Lake Baikal. The discharge of domestic sewage of JSC "BPPM", population, organizations and enterprises in Baikalsk is carried out by MUE "Sewage treatment facilities of the Baikalsk municipal formation" ("STF of town of Baikalsk"). The discharge of sewage into Lake Baikal from the Baikalsk's STF was 1770 thousand m³ in 2014 (discharge by JSC "BPPM" - 20 470 thousand m³ in 2013). The reduction of the volumes of discharge in the area of Baikalsk in relation to last year was amounted to 18.70 million m³ or 91.4%.

The emissions to the atmosphere totaled 0.867 tons at the Baikalsk PPM in 2014 (3,321 tons in 2013). As compared with 2013, the total emission of pollutants decreased by 74%, sulfur oxides - 80% NO_x - 71%.

Nearly 13.4 thousand tons of wastes was formed at the heating plant and other plants of the mill in 2014 (39.9 thousand tons in 2013). Two waste landfills in total area of 154 m, on which there are both active and decommissioned cards-accumulators of slurry lignin, were used to store wastes accumulated for the period of the mill operation. The total accumulated amount of waste exceeds 6 mln tons.

According to the observations of groundwater at the industrial site of the Baikalsk Pulp and Paper Mill in 2014 it is possible to conclude the continuing tense ecological situation. The intercepting water intake stopped working in connection with the cessation of production activities of the plant on October 15, 2013. As a result, groundwater quality deteriorated. This led to increased pollution on COD parameter - 4 times, by permanganate oxidation - more than 2 times, and lignin - 30%. The operation of intercepting water intake should be restored.

The public hearings of design solutions for waste management of the pulp and paper mill were held in Baikalsk on May 12, 2014. The work on the implementation of the Project of the reclamation of waste accumulated as a result of activity of JSC "BPPM" was not carried out in 2014, because the project did not pass the state examination and examination of the reliability of the estimated cost.

B A M z o n e . The state of the environment at the site of the BAM zone located within the boundaries of the BNT remains satisfactory. In 2014 there was no massive or emergency discharges and emissions to the atmosphere. The emissions to the atmosphere from stationary sources decreased by 0.607 thousand tonnes, 0.858 million m³ of wastewater was discharged into the river Tyva in 2014 (0.814 mln m³ in 2013). The amount of waste generated decreased by 44% compared to 2013.

Other natural - man-made objects. The intensity of groundwater contamination, as in previous years, remained high in the territory of Ulan-Ude and Nizhneselenginsk industrial centers in 2014.

The pollution of ground water of the thin Quaternary and Low-Cretaceous aquifers at the sites of placement of Gusinozerskaya TPP (ash dumps, industrial sites, and auxiliary facilities) was continued in the territory of the Gusinozersk industrial center.

The facilities of the non-operated Dzhidinsky GOK - piles of rocks and tailing pit - continued to have the negative impact on surface and underground water in the territory of the Zakamensk industrial center.

3. Lake Baikal protection measures carried out in 2014, are characterized as follows. .

Legal regulation and coordination of the protection of Lake Baikal. In 2014, two meetings of the Interdepartmental Commission for the Protection of Lake Baikal (hereinafter - the Commission) were held. As a result of the Commission's work, the following activities were excluded from the list of activities that are prohibited in the CEZ of BNT:

- bakery, production of pastry and pasta;
- construction of buildings and structures for activities authorized in the CEZ of BNT;
- transit of electricity generated abroad through the CEZ of BNT Prohibits:
- the production of pulp, paper and cardboard;
- construction of coal boiler houses in the CEZ of BNT with a simultaneous determination of the possibility of reconstruction and modernization of existing coal-fired boilers, including installation of new units in accordance with the requirements of technical and ecological safety.

The Federal Law "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation on the Baikal natural territory" No. 181-FZ (the Act) was adopted June 28, 2014, which amends the Federal Law dated 01/05/1999 No. 94-FZ "On the Protection of Lake Baikal". In the new edition of the law it is prohibited to construct new economic projects in BNT without a positive conclusion of the state ecological examination of project documentation. Earlier this restriction was applied only to commercial facilities in the CEZ of BNT.

Measures for Protection of Lake Baikal. In 2014, the implementation of the federal target program "Protection of Lake Baikal and the socio-economic development of the Baikal natural territory in the years 2012-2020" was continued.

Lake Baikal protection activities were financed from the federal budget in 2014 in the amount of 2,973,140.000 roubles (1,182,060.000 rubles - in 2013), of which 2,900,470.000 rubles (1,906,420.000 rubles was spent) in the framework of the federal target program "Protection of Lake Baikal and the socio-economic development of the Baikal natural territory for 2012-2020", and 72.67 million rubles - from other sources. The distribution of funds by type of expenditure is as follows: 1,306.5 mln roubles made up capital investments, 5.62 mln rubles - state monitoring of subsurface condition in BNT, 67.10 mln roubles - NIOKR, 1,593,920.000 rubles - other needs. 276.68 million rubles were spent from the budgets of the subjects of the Russian Federation for projects and activities to protect Lake Baikal, 235.08 mln roubles in 2013. Funds raised from extra-budgetary sources was amounted to 360.10 million rubles (it was planned 158 mln rubles).

In 2014, the work was carried out on 5 sites of coast protection, including Lake Baikal at the town of Baikalsk and at the Maximikha village of Bargusin district. The construction of the two-complex visit center, Tankhoi village, was completed in the territory of the FSBI "Baikalsk state natural biosphere wildlife reserve". The works on the installation of the propulsion system were performed, and launching of the body of the research vessel for the ecological monitoring of Lake Baikal.

The work on the elimination of accumulated environmental damage was continued in 2014 at sites such as Dzhidinsky tungsten-molybdenum plant and subsurface accumulation of oil polluting the water of the river Selenga near the settlement Steklozavod of the city of Ulan-Ude. The project of the elimination of negative impact of waste accumulated as a result of the activities of the Baikal Pulp and Paper Mill was presented at the public hearings and passed the state examination.

In 2014, the environmental monitoring was carried out by organizations of Roshydromet, Rosprirodnadzor, RosVodResursy, Rosnedra, Russian Federal Fisheries Agency, Russian Register, as well as bodies authorized by the authorities of subjects of federation - the Republic of Buryatia, the Irkutsk region, the Trans-Baikal Territory. In addition, for the purposes of monitoring of the BNT, the data of recording and monitoring conducted by the bodies of Rostekhnadzor, Rospotrebnadzor, Rostransnadzor, Rosstat, and Russian Emergencies Ministry were used.

The existing system of monitoring of the unique ecological system of Lake Baikal and BNT requires reconstruction of the observational network of Roshydromet, restoration of full scheme of hydro-chemical and hydro-biological monitoring, improvement and updating of the latest devices of laboratory facilities, rehabilitation of research fleet on Lake Baikal, further development of aerospace monitoring, optimization of the statistical reporting, and improvement of the interaction of authorized bodies in the field of public environmental monitoring.

Environmental surveillance. In 2014, the activities on state federal environmental surveillance of compliance with environmental legislation in the Baikal natural territory included 607 inspections (727 in 2013). As a result of inspections, 427 offenses were detected in 2014 (619 in 2013). The administration penalty in the total amount of 7,573 thousand roubles was imposed on the 311 violations. (12,003 thousand rubles in 2013), 6,179.5 thousand rubles were paid (6,577 thousand rubles - in 2013). 134 persons were brought to administrative responsibility (237 in 2013).

To comply with environmental legislation, 741 inspections were carried out in the territory of the BNT as a result of the regional state environmental inspection in 2014 (639 inspections in 2013). As a result of inspections, 1,207 offenses were detected in 2014 (599 in 2013). The administration penalty in the total amount of 9,861 thousand roubles was imposed on the 546 violations. (10,214 thousand rubles in 2013), 6,221 thousand rubles were paid (5,183 thousand rubles - in 2013). 463 persons were brought to administrative responsibility (485 in 2013).

Environmental offenses. In 2014, the number of administrative environmental offenses registered in BNT has increased by 19% (1632 to 1935), the number of crimes increased by 16% (2579 to 2979) compared to 2013.

International cooperation. The following activities were the most important in 2014.

The 38th session of the World Heritage Committee with the participation of the Russian delegation was held in the city of Dokha (Katar) on June 15-25, 2014. The reports about the state of more than 100 protected UNESCO sites, including Russian natural objects - "Lake Baikal", "Western Caucasus" and "Virgin Komi Forests", as well as cultural facilities - "Kizhi Pogost", "Historic Center of Yaroslavl", "cultural and historical complex of the Solovetskie islands" and "The Curonian Spit" were brought up for the approval of the Commission. UNESCO international experts offered recommendations on how to further ensure the preservation of the outstanding universal value of these Russian sites. The decisions of the committee formulated warnings in connection with the existing UNESCO information about foreign projects that could harm the unique Russian natural monuments, including Lake Baikal.

The 18th meeting of the Russian-Mongolian Intergovernmental Commission on Trade-Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation (IGC) was held in Ulan Bator on October 13-15, 2014. The cooperation in energy and environmental protection was discussed there. A question was raised about the exchange of information on the environmental impact assessment of the project of construction of HPP "Shuren" on r. Selenga.

The International Scientific Conference "Deltas: genesis, dynamics, modeling and sustainable development" was held in the international ecological and educational center "Istomino" (Istomino village of the Kabansky region of the Republic of Buryatia) on July 21-25, 2014. The conference was attended by 60 participants, including 30 foreign participants from 22 universities in the US, China, Canada, Netherlands, Japan, Switzerland, Italy. The participants noted the need for continuation of research of the functioning of delta ecosystems under the influence of anthropogenic factors (agriculture, forestry, recreation and so on) in the border areas of Russia, China and Mongolia.

The International Symposium on the Biology and Management of whitefish was held in Listvyanka (Irkutsk district of Irkutsk region) on August 25-30, 2014. A round table conference on "Fish-breeding, aquaculture and aquarium complexes: problems and prospects" was held within the framework of the symposium. The symposium program covered the following main areas: biology, evolution and population dynamics; systematics, phylogenetics, phylogeography and evolutionary ecology; fisheries management, stock assessment, conservation, behavior, aquaculture and fish farming. The leading domestic and foreign experts from US, Canada, UK, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and other countries were participated in the conference.

Provision of an access to information. 354,000 visits were recorded, and 963 gigabytes of data were downloaded at the web-site of the Ministry of Nature of the Russian Federation "Protection of Baikal Lake" during the period from January to December 2014. In 2014, the number of visits to the site increased by 18% compared with 2013, and amounted to an average of 950 visits per day. The volume of the downloaded data has increased 1.5 times.

4. It is necessary to implement the following key measures in the Lake Baikal protection activities in 2015-2016:

- in the field of the program-and-targeted management of the protection of Lake Baikal - to effectively implement measures and to master the full resources planned within the framework of the federal target program "Protection of Lake Baikal and the socio-economic development of the Baikal natural territory for 2012-2020";

- to intensify efforts on prevention of illegal catching of Baikal omul and Baikal sturgeon, conduction of additional raids during the spawning period (as part of measures No.No. 36, 37 of the federal target program "Protection of Lake Baikal and the socio-economic development of the Baikal natural territory for 2012-2020");

- in the field of environmental monitoring: to ensure the fulfilment of requirements of the Regulations on State environmental monitoring of unique ecological system of Lake Baikal (approved by Resolution of the Russian Government dated 2/2/2015 No. 85);

- to complete the development of the new edition of "Provision on the rules for use of water reservoirs of the Angara cascade."